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VOLUME 7 ISSUE 7
JULY 1999



Midway Madness

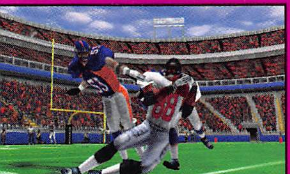
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Epiphany, n. 1. An appearance or apparition of a deity or other supernatural being. 2. (a) a moment of sudden intuitive understanding; a flash of insight; (b) a scene, experience, etc. that occasions such a moment.

Yep, that word about sums up what came over a legion of gaming journalists, retailers and super-jaded fan web site editors (nobody is more jaded than these guys... ah, the vagaries of youth) once they had their fill of DC wares. But before I really get into this, let me take a moment to explain the general feeling towards Sega, pre-E3:

Generally speaking, you'd almost expect that Sega had no idea what it was they were doing or even how to go about it. Numerous conversations amongst my peers at other gaming publications gave Sega about as much a chance at success on wowing the show-going audience as the Phoenix Suns had at progressing to the second round of this year's feeble NBA Playoffs. Talk of "Dreamcast doesn't look *that* impressive" and "*Shen Mue* looks old" were rife. I, of course, stood there slack-jawed and in complete amazement as apparently common sense and reason had fled reality and taken up residence in a local asylum. However, once they arrived at the show and gave a couple of DC games a whirl, things changed rather quickly. This is where epiphany kicked into overdrive as a legion of non-believers from all corners of the industry suddenly very much acknowledged and accepted the power of Dreamcast.

Games like Sega's *Sonic Adventure, NFL 2000, NBA 2000*; Midway's *Ready 2 Rumble, Mortal Kombat Gold*; Namco's *Soul Calibur*, Capcom's *Power Stone*, and a legion of other quality software will ensure that not only will Dreamcast have the single greatest launch in console history, but at least the best 6 months following that as well (games like *Floigan Bros., Furballs, RE: Code Veronica, Shen Mue* and others will see to that). It's almost unnerving, the sheer number of AAA titles that are coming down the line. Sure, a large number of them may not cater directly to the enthusiast gamer, but even barring that, anybody can recognize a quality line-up when they see and play it. In fact, the single biggest negative that can be leveled at the September 9th launch of DC is that there may be too many good games at one time (hard to believe that that's the biggest 'problem' Sega and co. have to deal with).

Ah, but Sega wasn't the only company at E3 that had their share of incredible software. As is always the case, Nintendo put their best foot forward with games like *Donkey Kong 64* (the first Expansion Pak-required game), *Perfect Dark* and *Jet Force Gemini* (**all** courtesy of Rare) as well as *Mario Golf 64, Command & Conquer, StarCraft* and the return of *Excitebike*! Which brings us to Nintendo's biggest problem, a library seriously lacking in internally-developed software. But again, with a line-up like this I don't hear too many people complaining. They also dropped the bomb on the upcoming 'Dolphin' hardware which they're working on with IBM and Matsushita (hmmm, shades of M2) and their intent to go head-to-head with Sony's PSY gear.

Speaking of Sony, the company that made the PlayStation as ubiquitous an item as the VCR actually had the weakest overall showing of the big 3. Titles like *Ape Escape, Gran Turismo 2, Crash Karts* and *Spyro 2* showed that while Sony may still be the champ, the gap between the PS hardware and its competitors is beginning to noticeably widen. Sony earned the dubious nickname of the 'sequel machine' from more than one disappointed show attendee. And while it's true that *Crash Karts* may be the best cart racing game yet, the mixed reception games like *Ape Escape* received showed that the burden is still squarely on the shoulders of 3rd parties to make the PS the machine to buy this year. Even the last minute production of a playable *GT* demo on PSY hardware did little to stave off the feeling that Sony seems very much ready to move into the next generation. A decent showing, but not very much to get worked up over going into the 3rd and 4th quarters of this year.

However, you can experience all that and more with the most comprehensive E3 coverage the world has ever seen beginning on page 21 and running for the following (commercial free) 42 pages. Instead of simply glossing over the smaller companies, we've gone through great pains to include **every** console game we could obtain info on within the pages of this issue. As well, you'll get show impressions from GF's staff of illustrious editors not to mention our top ten picks for the best games of E3.

Next month we introduce a new staff member some of you may be quite familiar with as well as a whole new look for Team GameFan courtesy of Patrick 'Spaz!' Spaziante (responsible for our *Sonic Adventure* **and** *Mortal Kombat Gold* covers). Till then, hang onto your seats — it's gonna be one helluva 6 months to come!

Editorial Director
Eric Mylonas

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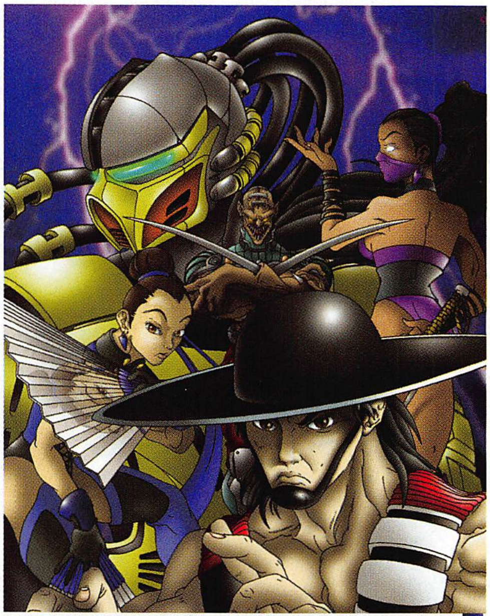
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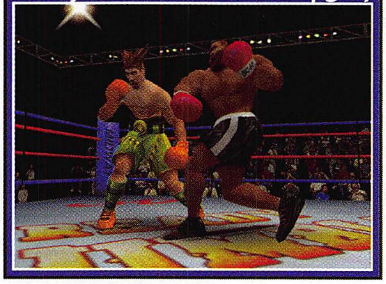
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Volume 7, Issue 7 July 1999

COVER STORY



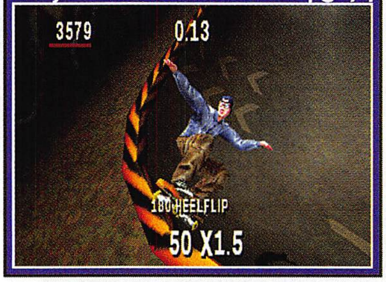
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TOP TEN MOST WANTED

July 1999

Mario Party

Publisher: Nintendo



Reader's Top ten

1) *Mario Party* - N64
2) *Zelda: OOT* - N64
3) *South Park* - N64
4) *Silent Hill* - PS
5) *Syphon Filter* - PS
6) *GoldenEye* - N64
7) *Rogue Squadron* - N64
8) *Metal Gear Solid* - PS
9) *WCW/NWO Thunder* - N64
10) *Xenogears* - PS

Reader's Most Wanted

1) *Final Fantasy VIII* - PS
2) *Sonic Adventure* - DC
3) *Perfect Dark* - N64
4) *Resident Evil 64* - N64
5) *Shen Mue* - DC
6) *Marvel vs. Capcom* - DC
7) *Dino Crisis* - PS
8) *Soul Calibur* - DC
9) *Dino Crisis* - PS
10) *House of the Dead 2* - DC

Final Fantasy VIII



GAMEFAN EDITORS' TOP TEN

*IMPORT TITLE



ECM

1) *Ready 2 Rumble* - DC
2) *Power Stone* - DC
3) *Radiant Silvergun** - SS
4) *Mortal Kombat Gold* - DC
5) *Crush Roller* - NGPocket
6) *Metal Slug* - NGPocket
7) *KoF: Round 2* - NGPocket
8) *Expendable* - DC
9) *Frame Gride* - DC
10) *Ecco the Dolphin* - DC



Dangohead

1) *Virtual On 2* - Arcade
2) *NBA Showtime* - Arcade
3) *Pocket Tennis* - NGPocket
4) *Soul Calibur* - DC
5) *NFL 2000* - DC
6) *Crazy Taxi* - Arcade
7) *Dino Crisis* - PS
8) *Powerstone* - Arcade
9) *SamSho II* - NGPocket
10) *Snow Brothers* - Arcade



Shidoshi

1) *UmJammer Lammy** - PS
2) *Soul Calibur* - Arcade
3) *KoF: Round 2* - NGPocket
4) *Metal Slug* - NGPocket
5) *Asuka 120% Limited** - SS
6) *Silent Hill* - PS
7) *To The North: WI** - DC
8) *Target Earth* - Genesis
9) *Smash Brothers* - N64
10) *Quake III Test* - Mac



Ego

1) *Devil Crash* - PC Engine
2) *SW: Episode 1 Racer* - N64
3) *Quake II* - PC
4) *Star Ocean: 2nd Story* - PS
5) *NBA Showtime* - Arcade
6) *Quake III Test* - PC
7) *Rising Zan* - PS
8) *Comix Zone* - Genesis
9) *Bust-A-Groove 2* - PS
10) *M.U.L.E.* - C64



Fury

1) *Zombie Revenge* - Arcade
2) *Hydro Thunder* - DC
3) *Quake II* - N64
4) *Dynamite Deka 2** - DC
5) *BoomBots* - PS
6) *Crazy Taxi* - Arcade
7) *Tony Hawk* - PS
8) *NBA Showtime* - Arcade
9) *Devil Crash* - PC Engine
10) *SW: Episode 1 Racer* - N64



El Niño

1) *Quake II* - PC
2) *Tony Hawk* - PS
3) *NBA Showtime* - Arcade
4) *Ready 2 Rumble* - DC
5) *NFL 2000* - DC
6) *Civ: Test of Time* - PC
7) *MK Gold* - DC
8) *Sled Storm* - PS
9) *Perfect Dark* - N64
10) *Quake III Test* - PC

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THE GAME SYSTEM OF YOUR CHOICE! ENTER TODAY!

All you have to do to enter the drawing is write down a list of your top 10 favorite games and the 10 games you want the most that aren't out yet, on a piece of paper or a postcard then send them to: GAMEFAN TOP TEN, 6301 DeSoto Ave., Suite E, Woodland Hills, CA 91367

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North Platte, NE	Vancouver, WA	Phoenix, AZ

Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page. For a complete list of rules and regulations write: GameFan Top Ten with self addressed & stamped envelope.

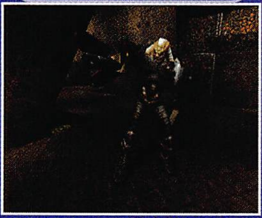
Developer's Top Ten

This Month's Guest: **David Michicich**
Game Designer, *Mortal Kombat*, Midway

All right, here's the deal: I'm making my own rules to this question because it is just way too hard for me to compare classics like *PacMan* & *Asteroids* to modern games like *Quake II* and try to rank them accordingly. Therefore, my top ten will consist of only games made in this decade, and no games that I'm affiliated with. (note: I don't own a Nintendo 64, so exclusive titles for that system are left out — sorry *Mario/Zelda/007*)

1) Quake II - PC Countless frags shed on this one. You just can't beat iD's deathmatch network game play. Other games in its genre may have matched or surpassed its graphics, but never its speed and its rail-gun, the best weapon EVER. What's truly genius about this game is how open ended it is. I'm still downloading new deathmatch levels (created by fans of the game) via the Internet. If you have never played *Quake II*, don't read on. You know what you have to do.

Quake II



Publisher: Activision

2) Metal Gear Solid - PS Its pace, play dynamic, depth, and pure coolness kept me up to sunrise many a night. This game has it all; a great arsenal, great A.I., and awesome bosses to defeat. This game raised the bar for all titles in its genre. SNAKE!!!!

3) Super Metroid - SNES A definite blast from the past! Can't estimate how many hours I played to finish all the worlds for the best ending, but well worth it! Superb level depth and power-ups! Even the gameboy version ruled! If a *Metroid* title was released for the Nintendo 64, I would have to shell out the cash for that system too, no questions asked. Just let me play as Samus Aran again!

4) Tomb Raider - PS I just couldn't get enough of Lara Croft when this title came out. I'm a big Indiana Jones fan, so I loved the look, feel & plot of the game. I welcomed its refreshing take on a 3-D engine game, and its game level depth made it such a solid title.

5) Bust-A-Move 2 - Arcade Time seems to fly by when playing this one. It's as addicting as *Tetris* was, and its head-2-head mode is even better. This puzzle game is made for everyone of all ages.

6) Crash Bandicoot - PS Yep, I'm a Crash fan! Great level design and puzzling bosses in the entire series. Its graphics are the most sharp and colorful, while its camera track never makes you feel enclosed. A great execution for its platform system, with each title getting better than its predecessor. This game shows off what the PlayStation can really do.

7) Donkey Kong Country - SNES Going back some years now. Its 3D rendered sprites made me take notice, and its play sold me. It's character development & level design pushed the envelope on what home games could offer on that generation of game systems.

8) Resident Evil - PS What a refreshing execution in game design, paving the way for an entire genre of titles to follow. Being a horror film fan, its cinematic approach in pace of action delivery & suspense hooked me in. I can't wait for the third in the series. It was, hands-down the best looking title for the new Dreamcast system at E3 '99.

9) ESPN2 Extreme Games - PS The first game I bought for my PlayStation, and I still play its two player competitive mode. Enough said.

10) Duke Nukem 3D - PS Its style, sarcastic humor, adult theme & single player level design, made this game stand out from the flood of *Doom* knock-offs. Its demo download sucked me in & got me wantin' more. Its full length level design was a deep payoff.



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G — Graphics
C — Control
P — Play Mechanics
M — Music
O — Originality



Centipede
PlayStation
Hasbro
Shooter



OK, I was never a fan of *Centipede* 'back in the day'. *Missile Command*? Now that was a man's game. I suppose if you liked the original you'll like this one, with decent graphics and the standard bug-crushing action, but this reminds me way too much of the '90s rev of *Frogger* (some games should never be upgraded). This might have been good for me on 8-bit, but I doubt it. I suppose it's now time for me to resume my silent vigil and prayer that Hasbro will grant me an updated *Yar's Revenge* on Dreamcast...

G 6 C 6 P 5 M 7 O 6 — **65**



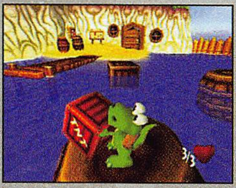
While I enjoy 'retro-gaming' just as much as the next guy, *Centipede* is one of those games which gives it a bad name. Many of the camera angles in the revamped version are unplayable, and the classic version outplays it tenfold... Did I mention that the classic *Centipede* is no fun either? Games have come a long way since Centipede first came out, and there are many other titles I'd rather play than this one right now. For what it's worth, other Hasbro titles suchas *Pong* and *Q-bert* show more promise than this.

G 6 C 7 P 3 M 6 O 2 — **62**

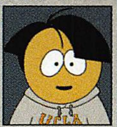


I'm sorry, but there's just no way to sugar coat this. *Centipede* on the PlayStation is a poor title with little to attract audiences... unless of course you love the original *Centipede* arcade game. Other than that, the new adventure mode is BUSTED! The camera angles are far too screw for my tastes and the graphics at best resembl what you'd expect on GameBoy Color. It's game like this that remind me that the PS is definitely o its last legs. SCEA should have instituted an originality policy long ago!

G 4 C 6 P 6 M 5 O 4 — **48**



Croc 2
PlayStation
Fox Interactive
Platformer



I really wanted to like *Croc 2*. Maybe it's cuz *Gex 3* left a bad taste in my mouth, but I've been chomping at the bit for a good platformer on the PS... and I will continue to chomp because I got no satisfaction from *Croc 2*. I rarely blame poor camera angles for being a problem in a game, but *Croc 2* redefines bad in this department. Even a younger audience, which this game is targeted for, shouldn't be subjected to the camera tortures which *Croc 2* puts you through. "Kersplat!" Stick with *Spyro*.

G 7 C 6 P 4 M 7 O 7 — **61**



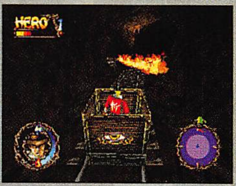
I was never a fan of the first *Croc*, and I could give a "croc" about the second one. First off, this game has camera issues that prohibit you from getting any enjoyment this game might've had. Second, the controls are awfully sluggish, comparable to something belonging to the 8-bit era. Finally, this game offers barely anything new from the original. Keep in mind that this game is geared for kids, but I don't even think kids will get any joy from this bundle of boredom. There are much better games for children.

G 7 C 6 P 7 M 6 O 7 — **68**



Like Dango, I have never been that fond of the *Croc* character. It just felt like developers were out of original ideas for a new hero and in a panic, came up with the Croc likeness. He simply is far too uninteresting and tame to be mentioned alongside mascot legends like Mario, Sonic or eve Crash. And sadly, *Croc 2* delivers very little in th originality department. More of the same broke gameplay from the first *Croc* adventure and th camera angles... oh such pain! Still, *C2* will most likely appeal to children.

G 7 C 5 P 6 M 7 O 5 — **65**



Rising Zan
PlayStation
Agetec
Adventure



This game receives my Fruit of the Year award. I was a bit apprehensive playing this after being subjected to *Soukaigi* a ways back (also by Yukes, published by Square), but this turned out to be a solid, if slightly ugly game. I suppose the best way to describe this game is to liken it to the type of girls we've all dated at one point or another: great personality but short on looks. Now if only Yukes could see to it that we get a new *Hermie Hopperhead* (in 2D, of course!).

G 6 C 7 P 8 M 7 O 9 — **85**



A samurai sword-wielding, Colt .45 slinging warrior? Ultra sexy! *Rising Zan* doesn't show us anything we haven't seen before, but combines all sorts of gameplay mechanics from various action/adventure games. While the graphics and animation could be a lot better, the draw to this game is the unique gameplay features, super fruity humor, and the off-the-wall combination of things that shouldn't go together. If you're looking for a game that's just plain weird, look no further.

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 8 — **85**



OK, lets get this straight... In one hand my character brandishes a Katana and in the other, a hand cannon. Hmm... in a fight which one would I choose? "Go ahead, make my day." Graphically, *Rising Zan* might leave much to be desired and the play mechanics are, uhh, a little odd... com bining straightforward third person action and puz zle elements with such well developed dialogue a "Super Ultra Sexy Hero Zan". But *RZ* does delive a quality experience for gamers looking for the not so common theme.

G 7 C 8 P 7 M 6 O 9 — **86**



Quake 2
Nintendo 64
Activision
Corridor Shooter



Being a big-time fan of *Quake II* on the PC, it's hard for me to look at its console sibling without wincing at the low-res pain. But I know not all of you own $2000 game machines, so I'll spare the PC rhetoric. For what it's worth, *Quake II* plays pretty well as a one-player game, with newly designed levels unique to the N64. The multi-player isn't bad either. But *GoldenEye* still reigns supreme and *Perfect Dark* looms in the near-future as well. With competition like that, *Q2* deserves just rental status.

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 8 — **80**



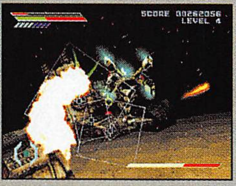
I'll admit it... I'm spoiled with GL *Quake II* on the PC. That being said, *Quake II* on the N64 is a pretty nifty FPS title. While four players can jump in on the fragging fun, Activision made a serious attempt at making the one player game more fun than the PC version. And you know what? It's not. The one player game is nothing more than finding the correct switch to open a door which leads to another switch to open the door to the generator... you get the picture. *GoldenEye* is still better.

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 6 O 7 — **78**

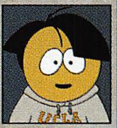


Being a pure console gamer, I have all but completely missed out on the violent goodness of *Quake II* on the PC. Thanks to Activision, however, all is not lost... *Quake II* on the N64 is awesome! While graphically the N64 rev might pale in comparisson to its PC counterpart, *Q2* still deliv ers excellent multi-player insanity that even rival the likes of *GoldenEye*. It's absolutely POINTLES to compare the N64 *Q2* to a thousand dollar plu version on PC. Enjoy it for what it is, and ignore the naysayers.

G 8 C 9 P 8 M 7 O 7 — **90**



Omega Boost
PlayStation Import
SCEI
Shooter



Burn me at the stake. Go right ahead, but I like *Omega Boost*. Maybe it's the whole 'mech combat in space' theme which appeals to my '80s cartoon-loving inner child, but I like it... The cynics will cry that *Panzer Dragoon* and *Gamera 2000* are better games, and they're absolutely right. But, *OB* is being released domestically, and it's a halfway original title (those are hard to come by in the Age of Sequels) for a PlayStation game. If you have *PD* or *G2000*, then don't bother, but if you don't...

G 8 C 8 P 7 M 7 O 9 — **83**



With all the hype that ECM has been building before playing it, I was getting pretty excited about *Omega Boost*. After playing the game, I began to question the sanity of my fellow GF brother (and apparently so is he, heh). Nice graphics and special effects don't make up for the lack of challenge this title offers. Flying in full 3D freedom and blowing enemies to bits a la *Panzer Dragoon* is fun for 30 minutes. Without any substance or difficulty, this game gets boring fast. A disappointment.

G 8 C 8 P 6 M 6 O 6 — **75**



I had great hopes for *Omega Boost*, especially coming from the *Gran Turismo* team. Alas, the end result came off far less original than I had expected... *Panzer Dragoon* with robots?! The graphics in *OB* are easily some of the best I've seen on the PS, but the gameplay is boring and after the firs few levels began to fizzle heavily. Although I forese this title selling extremely well, I can't help but fee that gamers would be better served tracking down copy of *Panzer Zwei*. SCEA should focus on more original themes.

G 9 C 8 P 6 M 5 O 4 — **79**


Coming Soon
Outlaws
aren't all bad.....
.....are they?
FUTURE HERO NEXT GENERATION
OUTLAW STAR
星方武侠
BLUE HEAVEN
Gene Starwind is a man with a past, but he doesn't talk about it. Working as a mercenary and bounty hunter, sometimes he works within the law and sometimes he doesn't. He and his female companions travel the galaxy in his ship, the Outlaw Star. And no matter how fast they go, danger always manages to catch up to them.
ENGLISH DUBBED
Also Look For:
Meet Lime, Cherry, and Bloodberry before they became the famous Marionettes they are today. This is the very first Saber Marionette animation, and it shows a somewhat different side to the characters. They're younger, but they still manage to get in just as much trouble. And of course, there's a group of adversaries to fight as their adventure gets underway. These girls never give up.
Distributed by:
Pioneer
Produced by:
BANDAI entertainment
© All rights reserved Bandai Entertainment, Inc.
SaBER MaRIONETTE R
Outlaw Star © Morning Star • SUNRISE / SHUEISHA • SOTSU AGENCY
Saber Marionette R © Satoru Akahori • Hiroshi Negishi / BANDAI VISUAL • MOVIC

Mortal Kombat® Gold

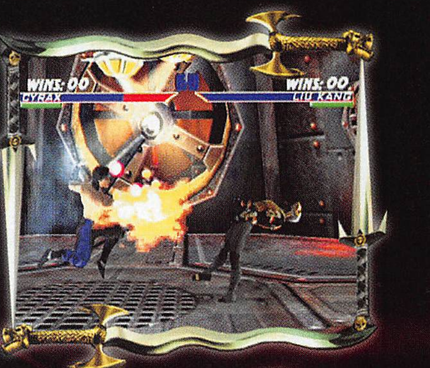
Fighting games come, and fighting games go; but mostly, they just keep coming...in awful, energy-draining, rabbit-punching droves. While most leave superficial bumps and bruises on the gamers' psyche there are a number of series out there that are fully capable of bludgeoning the gamer to death with over-the-top moves, brilliant graphics, and addicting gameplay. There are very few series of fighting games out there that most gamers will even consider worth their weight in *gold*. Games like Capcom's immortal *Street Fighter 2* series, Sega's *Virtua Fighter* trilogy, and Namco's *Tekken* franchise all stand out as shining examples of fighting game masterpieces (not personally sure about *Tekken*, but for the sake of this argument, it'll do). However, there's one other fighting game series. One that has more chapters than any other, minus *Street Fighter*, but for some reason, receives little or no respect from the gaming press, nor the hard-core.

However, before I name names, I have a confession (or two) to make — a deep, dark secret confession. Now, I consider myself as hard-core as they come. I've played countless games, import and domestic, and can probably give you the bio on as obscure a game developer as you can name with uncanny clarity and accuracy ("Good evening, I'm ECM, welcome to Video Game Biography..."). But even with all that 'hard-core' material at my beck and call, I also have time for games like *Dragon's Lair* and its kin and even, hold on to your spines...

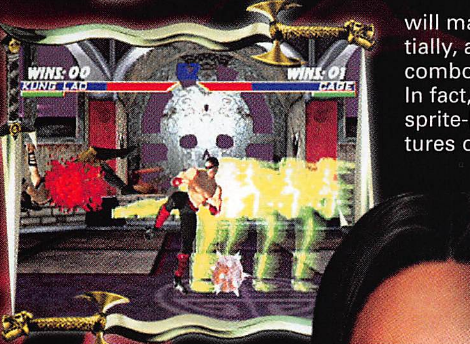


ECM: Welcome to the 'Golden Age' of fighting games | Developer - Midway | Publisher - Midway | 1-2 Players | Available Sept. 9





So it may be considered the red-headed stepchild of brawlers by fighting game aficionados, but I'm sure that every single person reading this has played *MK* in one form or another (I'm also sure the same can't be said for *Virtua Fighter*). And yeah, it may have been built around the whole 'blood is good' aesthetic that plagues game development from time-to-time, but it doesn't make one shred of difference to me: I love this game! Like it or not, most people can at least recognize that *Mortal Kombat 2* was one of the finest fighting experiences ever, and then go on to rail *MK3* and *UMK3* (rightly so, I might add), but the sad fact of the matter is that many a gamer passed over *MK4* simply because they assumed that it would be more of what *MK3* was all about (essentially a chain combo-fest). However, simply playing *MK4* for 30 minutes will make it painfully clear that *Mortal Kombat 4* was, essentially, a polygonal version of *Mortal Kombat 2* with the chain combos from *Mortal Kombat 3* thrown in for good measure. In fact, the only real problem I had was that it was no longer sprite-based, and had moved to the (perceived) greener pastures of 3D polygons and light-sourcing.

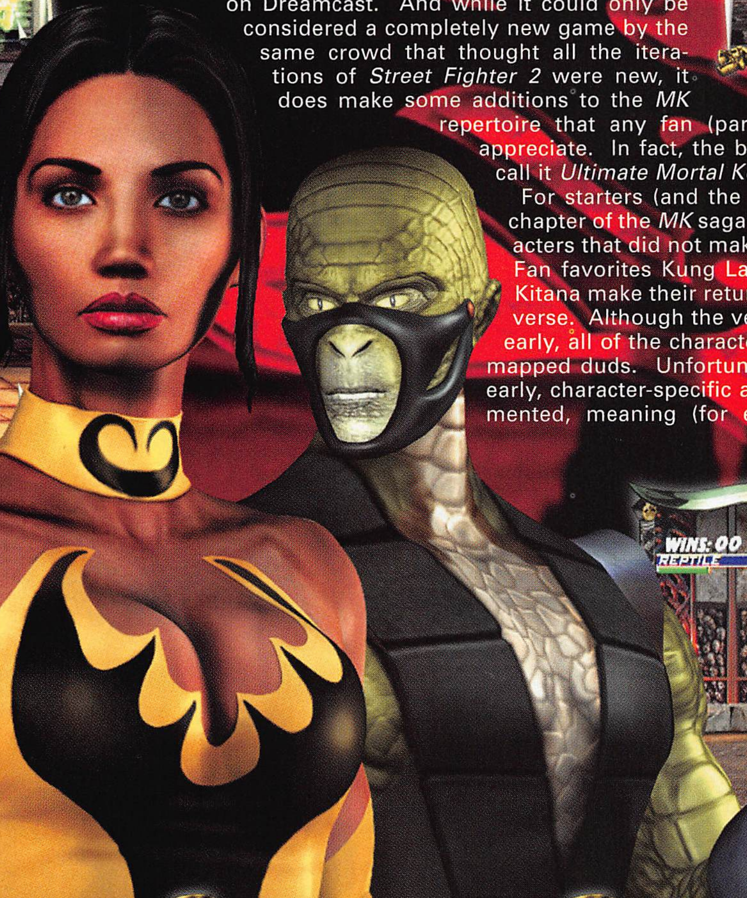




Which now brings us to *Mortal Kombat Gold* on Dreamcast. And while it could only be considered a completely new game by the same crowd that thought all the iterations of *Street Fighter 2* were new, it does make some additions to the *MK* repertoire that any fan (particularly of *MK2*) will greatly appreciate. In fact, the best way to describe *MKG* is to call it *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 4*.

For starters (and the single biggest addition to this chapter of the *MK* saga), there's the return of five characters that did not make the cut for the roster of *MK4*. Fan favorites Kung Lao, Baraka, Cyrax, Mileena and Kitana make their returns to a new, unfamiliar 3D universe. Although the version we played was still quite early, all of the characters were sporting fully texture-mapped duds. Unfortunately, since the burn was very early, character-specific attacks had not yet been implemented, meaning (for example) that Kung Lao was

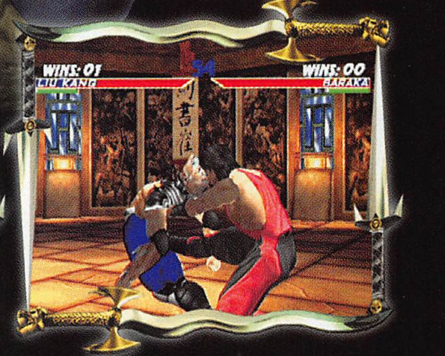












chucking fireballs instead of his deadly spinning hat. This will (obviously) be rectified by the final and Midway promises all your favorite moves from the past (Kitana's 'lift' attack, Baraka's scissors attack, etc.) will make it intact to this new rev with a few new ones thrown in for good measure. They've also seen fit to add a number of new backgrounds from *MK*'s of the past, so those of you that felt alienated after *MK2* will feel much more at home this time out.

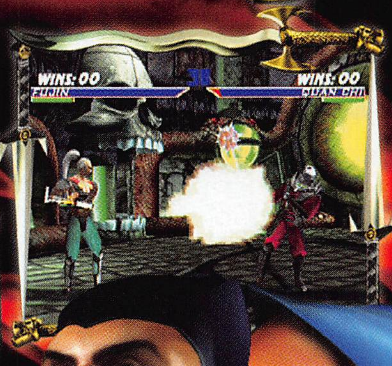


Also of note in this newest addition to the *MK* family are all-new rendered ending sequences for each character with much-improved CG. While I was quite the fan of the real-time endings in the arcade rev, I'm guessing I won't hear too many complaints from the CG-lovers out there that find that more important than the actual game (no really, they're out there — I like to call them Square-heads).

Beyond these upgrades, what's even more remarkable (although I guess I should have figured) is that the graphics in this version of *MK Gold* are actually superior to the arcade rev. As is the norm for games ported from the arcade to Dreamcast, the superior texture handling capability of the Power VR2 chipset make for sharper, more detailed textures. So now the reds are redder (what better to see the platelets with) and the whites (bone









white) are whiter, with all of it running at a supercharged, never-drops-a-frame 60 FPS. Granted, *Mortal Kombat 4* wasn't the overall graphic powerhouse that *Virtua Fighter 3tb* was, but you'll not find me complaining.

That about sums up what makes *MK Gold* tick. So will it be worth purchasing if you already have *MK4* on some other, nameless console? Well, that's quite simple, actually. If you'd like a version that's superior to the arcade in every way, with new characters, better graphics, and lots of gratuitous CG, then look no further. *MK Gold* is kicking its way to a DC launch site near you September 9th. We'll be back with a full review come our September issue. **ECM**







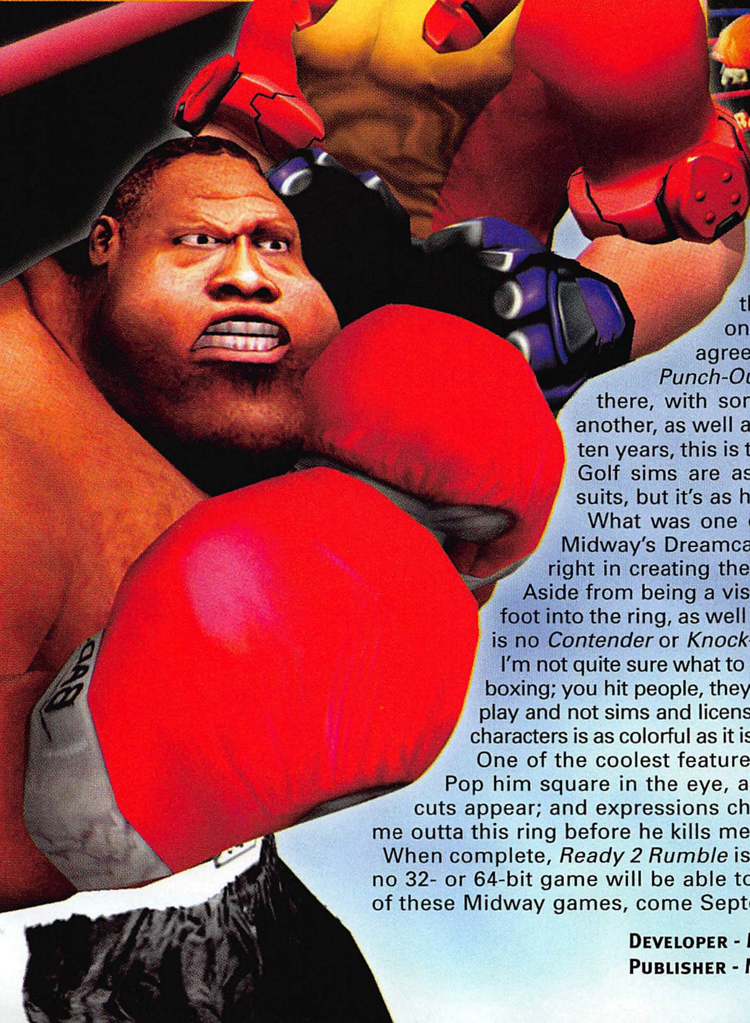


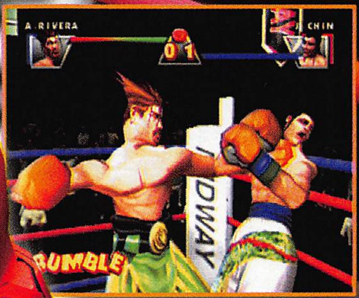


Ready 2 Rumble Boxing













I defy you to come up with five boxing titles, on consoles, that have been good. Can't, can you? I thought not. Don't worry, though, 'cause neither can anyone at GameFan. We were all in agreement on *Punch-Out* and *Super Punch-Out*, but opinions differed from there, with some claiming *Ring Kings* to be another, as well as *Legends of the Ring*. In over ten years, this is the best this industry could do? Golf sims are as numerous as NBA paternity suits, but it's as hard to find a boxing title as it is a PhD in Kentucky. Go figure.

What was one of the most impressive games of the show is the crown jewel in Midway's Dreamcast launch line-up. *Ready 2 Rumble* looks to have done everything right in creating the first 128-bit boxing game. This game is, quite simply, marvelous. Aside from being a visual treat, *R2R* will boast some of the coolest characters ever to step foot into the ring, as well as the best gameplay to come along in what seems like an eon. This is no *Contender* or *Knock-Out Kings*; this game is the real deal.

I'm not quite sure what to tell you other than the controls are responsive and the afros are big. It's boxing; you hit people, they fall over, you move on to your next match. Its attention to arcade-style play and not sims and licenses allowed the developers to get creative... and it pays off. The cast of characters is as colorful as it is unique, from the enormous jar-heads to the skinny little speed demons.

One of the coolest features is the way you can alter a guy's face when you thump on him. Pop him square in the eye, and he'll swell up like a summertime melon. Eyes get blackened; cuts appear; and expressions change, from the hungry "eye of the tiger" look to the "oh god get me outta this ring before he kills me!" face of despair.

When complete, *Ready 2 Rumble* is gonna be the boxing game to beat, setting a highwater mark that no 32- or 64-bit game will be able to compete with. I only hope I have enough money to get all four of these Midway games, come September. **EN**

Developer - Midway | **1-2 Players** | **El Nino: Let's get ready to — well, you know...**
Publisher - Midway | **Available Sept. 9**







One of Midway's four launch titles, *Hydro Thunder* is an arcade perfect — nay, better than arcade perfect — racing behemoth. If you're one of the arcade faithful who has pumped many a quarter into this machine, you'll be excited to know that not only is the DC version everything that you loved about the coin-op, it is a little more. The textures are actually *better* on the home system than in the arcade version, while maintaining the gameplay and sense of speed. For those of you who didn't play the coin-op, here's a little rundown on what to expect.

Hydro Thunder is all about high speed boat racing; it's a game that puts you in a field of super-boats, battling for the top slot in a secretive racing society known as the H.T.R.A. (Hydro Thunder Racing Association). Hand picked by a council of persons unknown to you, you are given a map to the next race, where you begin your dangerous, and hopefully fruitful, career amongst these adrenaline junkies.





As exciting as it is visually impressive, *Hydro Thunder* successfully fuses a great boat-racing physics model with some seat-of-your-pants gameplay and the kind of replay value that is sorely missing from many of today's video games. You can race the circuit water courses, numbering eleven, including several secret tracks to unlock. You will also be able to unlock a series of hidden super boats — assuming you have what it takes to compete. The total number of boats, in the game, is 13.

Hydro Thunder







The basics of the game resemble those of any other racing title. The keys to success lie in your ability to navigate the course, utilize the turbos and discover shortcuts. There are two types of "booster" balloons to be found: four-second and nine-second. Collect these balloons to fill your turbo meter (to a max of 18) for maximum speed at the most opportune moments. Used properly, this turbo will help you perform jumps and maneuvers that will allow you to access the shortcuts that will be necessary for you to use, in your quest for victory.



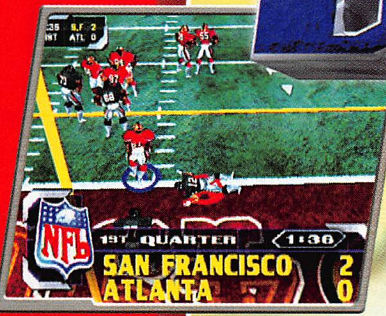


Midway has given us another stellar title with all of the key components. If this is the level of quality we are seeing from first generation Dreamcast titles, I can only imagine what we can expect, come this time next year. Now if I could only convince these guys to do an update of *Super Sprint Championship Edition*, I'd be in Gamer's Nirvana. **EN**



El Nino: Oh buoy oh buoy oh buoy oh buoy...	Developer - Midway Publisher - Midway	1 Player Available Sept. 9

NFL Blitz 2000™

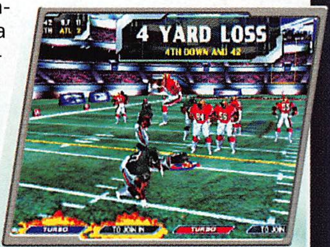














Already reaching legendary status in the arcades, *NFL Blitz* is now one of the hottest console franchises going, and truly is *the* Monster of the Gridiron. The console which displays this title in its most glorious, bone-crunching mayhem is the Dreamcast. Maiming has never been so much fun.

For Midway, this is another home version that outclasses its coin-op counterpart. Faster running and better looking, *NFL Blitz 2000* on the Dreamcast is another must-have (I've been saying that a lot lately, where Dreamcast titles are concerned). Everything that makes the arcade version such a high-octane, addictive gaming experience is perfectly captured on the DC. The hits look just as rough, the players move exactly as they should, and the frame rate is an impressive 60fps. Oh yeah, and the taunting remains as entertaining as ever: "Is that all you got? I pity the fool who tries to run on me. Hannibal, I ain't getting on that plane with that crazy fool, Murdoch." Well, ok, so there aren't any Mr. T lines, but how cool would that be?

For the uninitiated (shame on you!), *Blitz* is a 7-on-7 arcade football experience, resembling *NBA Showtime* or *NHL Open Ice*. Fully licensed by the NFL and player's association, *Blitz 2000* features big plays, big hits and big talk. You have to go 30 yards for a first down and there are no troublesome refs or penalties to hold you back. The create-a-play feature allows you to come up with your own money plays while the Training Mode lets you try them out, to make sure they *are* money. Arcade, Tournament and Season Mode make sure you've got plenty of gaming options.

Few games available offer the kind of enjoyable gaming that *Blitz 2000* has. Loud, fast and audacious, *Blitz* has dead-on gameplay and the unlimited replay value of the best sports titles. Even those who don't fancy themselves [note: this will be the only time you will ever see the word "fancy" used in a GameFan article] football fans will find themselves drawn to this title. Hell, even Eggo likes it and I've busted him in a dress... **EN**



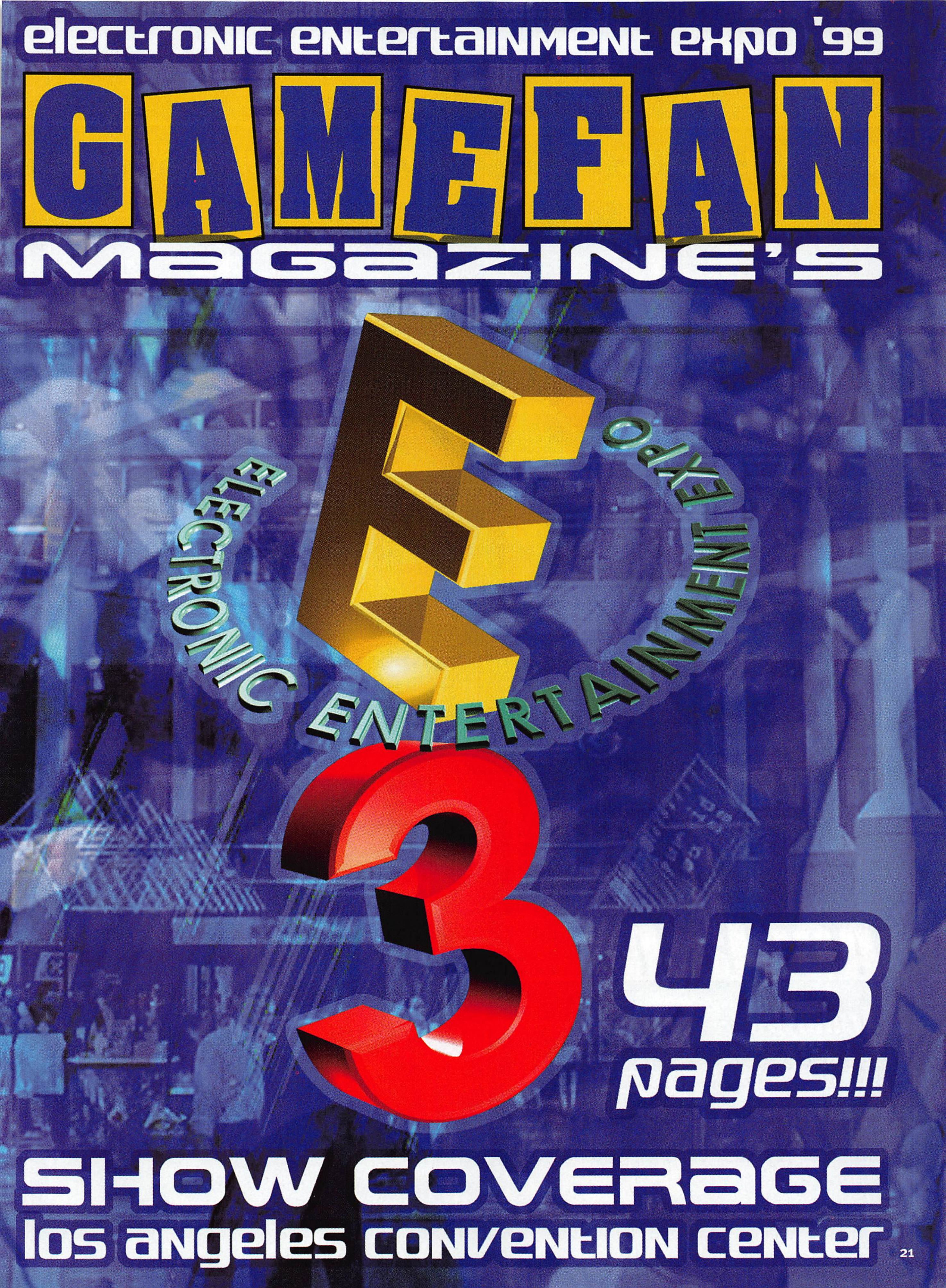
"Have you been playin' the foosball behind my back?"

DEVELOPER - MIDWAY | 1-4 PLAYERS | EL NINO: PUTTIN' THE HURT ON, DREAMCAST STYLE...
PUBLISHER - MIDWAY | AVAILABLE SEPT. 9





THE "KIDS" ARE BACK!
Race your friends in the improved multiplayer mode and find out who really is King of the mountain!
New control interface allows for insane trick combinations!
Find the all-powerful Dragon Board, plus 17 others to speed your way down the slopes!
Use over 10 ingenious power-ups to get ahead of the pack!
Race on a multitude of terrains! Such as underwater, uphill, and Outer Space!
Snowboard Kids 2
NINTENDO 64
Only For
Designed For N64 Rumble Pak
1-4 Player/Simultaneous
EVERYONE
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los angeles convention center

3DO

While they had a relatively small booth, 3DO's area was placed right in front of the Big Three (Sega, Sony, and Nintendo), giving them a nice crowd of people going in and out. 3DO's lineup could be summed up in two words: sequel mania. Still, 3DO had a nice variety of genres to play, be it on PC, PSX, or N64. And while there is still no word on Dreamcast development, *Army Men: Air Attack* plays very similar to *Herzog Zwei*, one of the best Sega Genesis games.

Army Men: Air Attack

PlayStation

A comical, 3D version of *Herzog Zwei*; command troops and devise tactics to obliterate your enemies, whether it's by strafing enemy soldiers with gunfire or dropping donuts on tanks.



Army Men: Sarge's Heroes

PlayStation • N64

Take control of Sarge and the Green as you keep the walls of good safe from the evil Tan army. Featuring humorous animations, and a plethora of weapons, prepare for some comedic action.



Battle Tanx II: Global Assault

N64

3DO's successful game comes back with a sequel promising more firepower, more action, better multi-player features, and Snuggle... well, maybe Snuggle won't make the final cut.



Family Game Pack 2

PlayStation

Fun for the whole family continues on the PlayStation with Family Game Pack 2! With over 50+ traditional card games (including the El Niño favorite, "Spades"), you need not worry about dealing from the bottom of the deck.

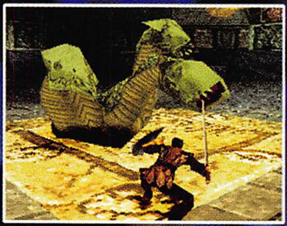


Crusaders of Might and Magic

PlayStation

The famous PC role-playing series comes home to full form on both the PSX and N64. Finally, some classic D&D role-playing for a change.







Acclaim

While poor unfortunates played the sports games which lay on the outside, the inside of Acclaim's encampment housed the true meat of their lineup. Pausing only briefly at the sports games, we were more excited about the *Starship Troopers*-like *Armorines;* the big, bad voodoo daddy *Shadowman*; *Revolt*; and *Trickstyle... Streak*, done right. *South Park Rally* also looks promising, combining *South Park* humor with... gameplay! Now, Eggo's just wondering who has the rights to the *South Park Movie* game.

Armorines

N64

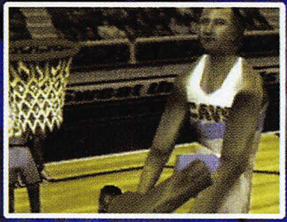
Starship Troopers meets *THEM!*, they fall in love and *Armorines* is the result. A first person shooter with [mandible] bite.



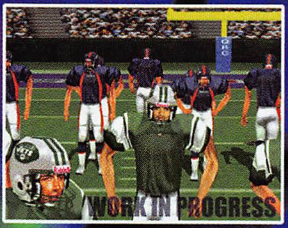
NBA Jam 2000

N64

A franchise which is beginning to show signs of age... But still a step up from last year's installment; gotta love that 5-on-5 action.

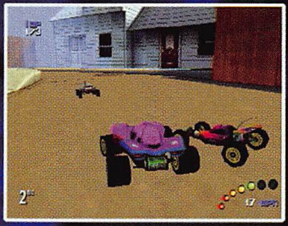


Quarterback Club
Dreamcast • N64



One of the top football sims just keeps getting better, and the addition of a Dreamcast version is good news for gamers looking for choices. Unfortunately, the DC version isn't that big of a leap over the N64 one.

Re-Volt
PlatStation • N64



Try your luck at racing with radio-controlled cars. Think *Micro Machines* with antennae... and mud.

Shadowman
N64



Enter the world of the dead, where you are the Shadowman, a being with magical voodoo powers. The PC version was at the show, and it looked amazing, with a silky smooth framerate, abundant animation, and mucho action/puzzles.

WWF Attitude
PlayStation • N64



It's wrestling, and you know who you are! So you don't need the Rock to educate your monkey ass on buying this game.

Turok: Rage Wars
N64

A new *Turok* game with multi-player emphasis. New weapons, new levels, yada yada. Could this be the rumored Dreamcast game in development by Acclaim?

Trickstyle
Dreamcast



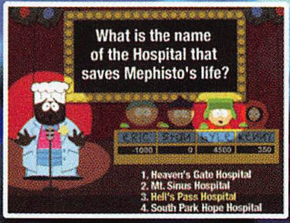
A beautiful-looking *Streak* clone with the speed and control to keep you riveted to your seat. Looks like a keeper.

South Park Rally
PlayStation • N64



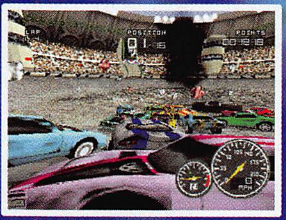
It's the latest trend in videogames — *Mario Kart*-style racing from Sony, Square, Hudson, and now Acclaim. Now it's time for that trend to hit a little town in Colorado... it's *South Park Rally*!

South Park: Chef's Luv Shack
PlayStation • N64



South Park comes to Sony's gracefully-aging poly-pusher. Throw white snowballs, yellow snowballs (use your imagination), dodge balls, or Terrance & Phillip dolls at mutant turkeys, aliens, and Little Gay Als in this first person shooter with a kickass twist.

Demolition Racer
PlayStation



Destruction Derby revisited? With 12 tracks to race on and 16 racers crashing into each other, be prepared for a smashing good time.

Accolade

Better known for its PC titles, Accolade has been shooting off more versions of the *Test Drive* series than Nintendo has done for *Mario*. Their two Dreamcast games looked phenomenal at the show, and I hope that Accolade will be doing more development for Dreamcast. But until then, Accolade's lineup is laden with more racing games than you can swallow.

Slave Zero
Dreamcast

BIG ROBOTS fighting in a BIG CITY leads to some BIG ACTION on the Dreamcast. Pick a robot, hunt down your opponent, and clear the city of its buildings.







Test Drive 6
Dreamcast • PlayStation

Revamped for more depth and realism, *Test Drive 6* comes with more unique tracks, upgrades for your car, and more cops on your tail. Graphics in this game are excellent.



Test Drive Off-Road 3
PlayStation

Another driving game from Accolade? Well, *Test Drive Off-Road* completes the cycle by offering the ability to modify your vehicle for each track, as well as 30 licensed off-roading monsters.



Activision

Activision drew in some serious crowds with an awesome game lineup that included *Quake 3* on the PC (hmm, *Quake 3* drawing mass crowds... go figure). Tony Hawk was also spotted by several editors promoting his new skating game, *Tony Hawk Pro Skater*. The big A's decision to pick up *Blue Stinger* was a bit of a surprise, but very fortunate for American gamers. *Quake 2* on the N64 also looked quite promising for the non-PC gamer looking to pick up a frag count of their own.

Marvel's X-Men
PlayStation

The first 3D outing for the mutant brigade was playable, but looked very early. Activision must put many more hours into this one.



Blue Stinger
Dreamcast

A direct port of the Japanese Version. Similar to *Resident Evil*, it looks detailed, with minimal slowdown and minor camera problems.







Quake II
N64

N64 owners can finally kill, maim, and annoy parents the world over. Expect multi-player insanity that rivals even the likes of *GoldenEye*.



Space Invaders
PlayStation

The remake of the old classic gets revamped with some cool visuals, new play mechanics, and new weapons. Old school mindless shooting revisited!



Spider-Man
PlayStation



The web-slinger breaks onto the PSX and looks very solid. It was demo only, but the levels were massive and the gameplay looks promising.

Tenchu II
PlayStation



Shadow action/adventure returns in full throat-slitting, shuriken throwing, grappling-hook climbing, form. Added features include new weapons and abilities like swimming and underwater combat.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater
PlayStation



Skateboarding is not a crime in this visually stunning and fluid title. Play as some of today's hottest pro riders and get ready to tear up a bit of asphalt on the PS.

Toy Story II
PlayStation

Buzz and Woody are back in this 3D adventure game where players must battle to save Woody from the clutches of an evil toy collector.

Vigilante 8: Second Offense
Dreamcast • PlayStation • N64



A sequel appearing on PSX, N64, and DC. More of what made the first game memorable, and the Dreamcast version ranks among the best of show.

Wu Tang: Shaolin Style
PlayStation



The 'killah beez' swarm onto the PSX in this kung fu-inspired brawler which features up to four players.

Air Boardin' USA
N64



Shown at last year's E3, it's about time this game comes out. *Back to the Future 2* airboarding with gameplay reminiscent of *720*.

Agetec

With nothing really new to show, the Agetec booth was not one of the booths the GF staff kept coming back to. Still, *Rising Zan* was very fun, if a bit strange. *R-Type Delta* looks great on the PSX, and *Fighter Maker* puts fighting fans at the helm of creating their own fighting characters. But with so many other booths either displaying games many of us have never seen before, or showing off ladies we will never see again, Agetec needed some more pizzazz at the show.

Bass Landing
PlayStation



Hey fishing fans, if you can't get enough of these games, Agetec's *Bass Landing* might be for you.

Echo Night
PlayStation



A *Myst*-like game, you must discover the mystery of your father's disappearance. Strong story and character development are the major attractions of this game.

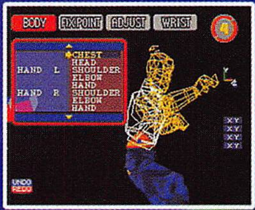
Shadow Tower
PlayStation



An adventure game that made *King's Field* famous, *Shadow Tower* introduces hideous monsters , maze-like dungeons, and treasures to make any mortal a king!

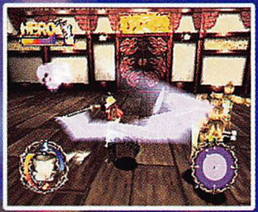
Fighter Maker
PlayStation

Think you can make better fighters than Yu Suzuki? Well, here's your chance as *Fighter Maker* allows you to customize everything with incredible attention to detail.



Rizing Zan: The Samurai Gunman
PlayStation

Take part in this zany adventure as Johnny the Samurai Gunman. Mixing themes from the Wild West to feudal Japan, this one isn't meant to be taken too seriously.



R-Type Delta
PlayStation

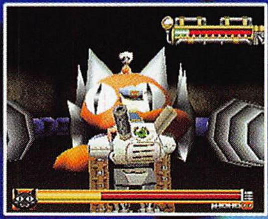
The venerable shooter returns with a vengeance in 3D! Explosive special effects, spectacular visuals, and great tunes make this one to look out for.



Atlus

Atlus has really tightened up their lineup, and more and more they are becoming the next game company to give awesome Japanese games a chance that normally wouldn't get one. To see proof of this, one need only look at games such as *Thousand Arms* (the first game in the US, to my knowledge, to have dating sim aspects) and *Tail Concerto* (an awesome 3D game in the vein of *MegaMan Legends*). Of course, there is also *Maken X*, which brings the dark and daring ideas that Atlus is known for to Sega's power system.

Tail Concerto
PlayStation



Atlus picks up this great 3D-adventure title about a young police dog that must protect his city from a band of pirate cats.

Thousand Arms
PlayStation

An RPG combined with a dating sim? And we're actually seeing it here in the U.S.? We should thank Atlus from the bottom of our hearts.



Revelations: The Demon Slayer
GameBoy Color

It's not the next *Megami Tensei* title we really wanted, but it's still cool. Battle demons and evil on your shiny new GameBoy Color.



Maken X
Dreamcast

Interesting Dreamcast first person adventure where you actually ARE the weapon. Intriguing character designs and some cool new gameplay concepts.





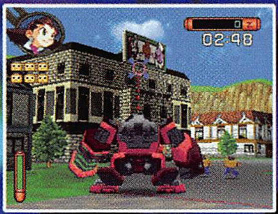


Good things shouldn't change, and Capcom knows this. This year, the lineup was very strong, save one game which the whole *GF* staff was disappointed with. Overall, many at *GF* think Capcom had one of the best third party booths, with a great mix of console and arcade games. And no, we're not saying this just because *GameFan* dominated the *Power Stone* tourney.

Capcom

The Misadventures of Tron Bonne

PlayStation



Play as MegaMan's nemesis (from *MegaMan Legends*) as you venture off in pursuit of pillaging and robbery. Playing the bad girl was never so much fun!

Dino Crisis

PlayStation



Resident Evil meets *Jurassic Park*? Sounds like a whole new adventure in survival horror to me! Without a doubt, one of the most anticipated titles for the PSX this year.

Marvel vs. Capcom

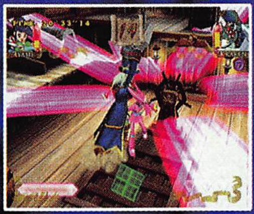
Dreamcast



Dreamcast knows 2D and *Marvel vs. Capcom* shows this. Gorgeous animation with no slowdown is just the tip of the iceberg. In short, arcade perfection.

Power Stone

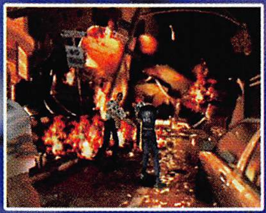
Dreamcast



Featuring excellent graphics, exacting attention to detail, and awesome special effects, *Power Stone* will likely become one of the DC's best selling titles.

Resident Evil 2

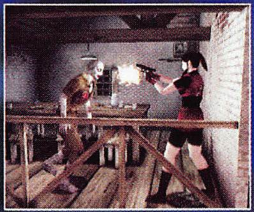
N64



Whoa! Where did this come from? While the FMV sequences need work, in-game graphics and gameplay are rock solid. Survival horror finally makes it to N64 owners.

Resident Evil: Code Veronica

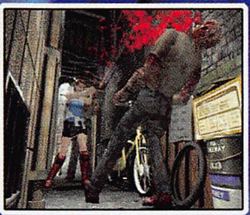
Dreamcast



RE: Code Veronica looks to become the best *Resident Evil* ever. While not playable at the show, much of the GF staff was glazing over the video, over and over, and over...

Resident Evil 3 Nemesis

PlayStation



The third installment of the famous *Resident Evil* series gives you more weapons, more monsters, and more heart-jumping scares than ever before.

Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike

Arcade



The third installment of the *Street Fighter III* series delivers a big time punch with new characters, new features, and untouchable animation, 2D is far from dead.

Street Fighter Alpha 3

Dreamcast



Man, if *Marvel vs. Capcom* wasn't enough 2D for ya, Capcom is going to overstuff you with this monstrous title. In one word, flawless.

Trick N' Snowboarder

PlayStation



And you thought Capcom only knew fighting, eh? While it may not be the best looking snowboarding game, the control and gameplay mechanics are right on the money.

Codemasters

Located quite close to our booth, Codemasters' area was relatively small. Not being in either the South Hall or West Hall (where all the major video game players were) didn't give them a huge audience, but Prince Naseem Boxing drew the biggest crowd of onlookers.

Music

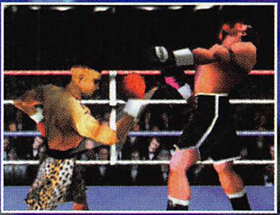
PlayStation



Prepare to be the life of the party with *Music* by Codemasters. *Music* features over 750 musical riffs and over 3000 sampled instruments.

Prince Naseem Boxing

PlayStation



Prince Naseem's getting ready to KO the competition in this exciting new boxing title. Detailed graphics and three separate modes of play are sure to wow boxing fans this Spring.

No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking

PlayStation



Have no fear as you take control of eight speed demons in this adrenaline-pumpin' mountain biking game. With over 25 trails in nine different countries, you're certain to crash and burn on the PSX.

TOCA 2 - Touring Cars

PlayStation



Touring car fanatics should love this fast-paced four player racer with hi-res graphics and eight separate circuits.

Crave

Crave's area had some very plush leather seats, a very-well organized display of games, and two cute Jade Cocoon models with 'misproportioned attributes.' Many here at GF were impressed with Crave's Dreamcast lineup, which consisted of pre-published Japanese works and ambitious in-house projects. And while Natsume and Crave were sharing a booth, there was a misconception that both had merged (which was not the case as a Natsume rep vehemently explained to us).

Aero Wing

Dreamcast



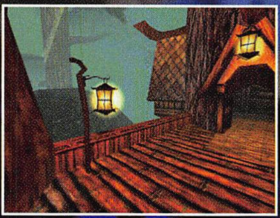
Also known as *Aero Dancing* in the Land of the Rising Sun, fly various jet planes while performing tricks. Looks great, but is about as fun as eating Spaghetti-O's the first time.

Blades of Vengeance

Dreamcast

One of the in-house DC titles, *BoV* looks very ambitious. Play as a knight in a large magical world, getting in all sorts of trouble and adventure.







Battlezone 64

N64



Wow... while only a non-playable demo was shown at Crave's booth, this game looks to be impressive. Hopefully, the multi-player aspect of the game won't be broken.

Asteroids Hyper 64

N64



The remake of the classic game gets redone for the N64. Looks impressive and nothing is lost in the translation from the PSX version.

Disney

Disney's area was always bright and full of childhood magic. And the games they had glowed with the same kind of feeling. Learning and creativity games for kids bloomed like dandelions at Disney's booth, and the only console attraction that needed to be covered was the new *Tarzan* action game.

Tarzan

PlayStation







Platforming aspects reminiscent of *Crash*, this game will probably sell big, not just because of the movie hype, but because of the solid gameplay.

Cyber Tiger Wood's PGA Tour 2000

PlayStation • N64

Tiger Woods headlines the all-star cast of both real and fantasy players in this annual installment. The courses are well-detailed and tough enough to challenge the best of gamers.

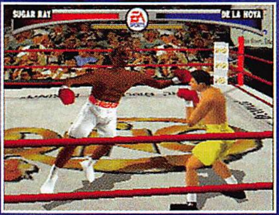


EA

EA was definitely sports central, with an actual wrestling ring in the center of their booth. Along with a real sports bar, EA also displayed a number of big name console games including *Tomorrow Never Dies* and *Sled Storm*. A Lucy Lawless lookalike was also on hand to promote EA's recent acquisition, *Xena: Warrior Princess* for the PS. Sadly, there were still no announcements made regarding EA developing titles for the DC. We at GameFan can only encourage EA to make the proper decision... <ahem!> DC <cough, cough>

Knockout Kings 2000

PlayStation • N64



EA's boxing title returns with minor upgrades and "2000" attached. Upwards of 50 boxers will be included in both versions, combined with a classic battle mode.

Madden NFL 2000

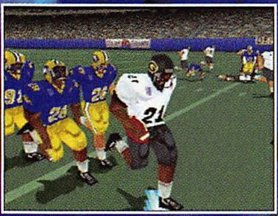
PlayStation • N64



Improved motion capture and graphical speed mark the latest in the franchise. Expect all teams and stadiums, along with favorite teams from the past.

NCAA Football

PlayStation



EA ups the ante on licensing, with 141 college teams and 80 historical teams now included. Think of it as "*Madden*-lite", with a dab of Bowl games thrown in.

Road Rash 2000

PlayStation



Time to pursue a bit of good ol' road rage with EA's *Road Rash 2000*. With improved combat moves and the option to play as the fuzz... break out the bandages.

Sled Storm

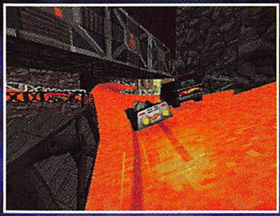
PlayStation



The only snowmobile game on the PlayStation features over 50 tricks and grueling courses in this extreme winter racer.

Hot Wheels

PlayStation • N64



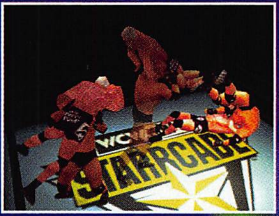
Time to feel like a kid again in EA's upcoming *Hot Wheels* game for the PSX and N64. With tons of classic Hot Wheels cars to choose from and an all-star soundtrack, you simply can't go wrong with this game.

Tomorrow Never Dies
PlayStation



Bond is back, but this time without the help of Rare. Still, *TND* looks very promising with tons of cool gadgets and deadly 007 weapons.

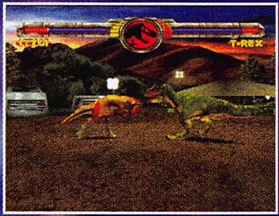
WCW Mayhem
PlayStation • N64



Get ready for some slammin' action more powerful than *Nitro! WCW Mayhem* has over 600 motion-captured animations and all your favorite WCW superstars. Goldberg's waiting...

Warpath: Jurassic Park
PlayStation

Just when you thought the *Jurassic Park* franchise was dormant, here comes a fighter starring the loveable dinos from Spielberg's mega-hit. *Primal Rage* anyone?







Eidos

Much like last year, the highlights of Eidos' booth were not really the games. As many of the staff have come to expect, Eidos always kept their booth brimming with beautiful models, and of course, a real-life Lara Croft. With a new Lara and skin-tight body suit-wearing Playboy models, many were distracted from the rather large video game line-up Eidos presented... Many of the GF staff noted the signs on all the games indicating that no game footage could be taken on video, which led to the assumption that many of the games shown were far from complete.

Fear Factor
PlayStation



An action/adventure in the vein of *Resident Evil*, take control of a team of three mercenaries on a mission for the Hong Kong Triad gangs.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver
PlayStation

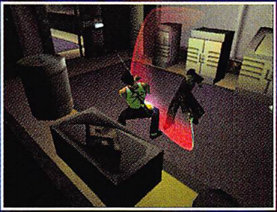
Still looking great despite its age, *LoK: Soul Reaver* looks more solid and less buggy. Let's just hope it comes out soon before Raziel succumbs to advanced old age.







Saboteur
PlayStation



Another 3D espionage/action game, take control of Shin Ienaga as you battle an evil corporation with your faithful sidekick Shiro (*Shadow Dancer*, anyone?).

Omikron: The Nomad Soul
PlayStation



Do you believe in reincarnation? *Omikron* goes beyond the question and places you in a world of Virtual Reincarnation. An extremely ambitious 3D action/adventure.

Urban Chaos
PlayStation



Take control of either a cop or street hoodlum in this 3D adventure in which you venture into the urban jungles where a prediction by Nostrodamus of the destruction of the world will take place... <gasping for breath> Did you get all that?

Fighting Force 2
PlayStation



Unlike the first, *Fighting Force 2* seems to combine the hand-to-hand elements of the original with *Metal Gear Solid* game mechanics.

FOX

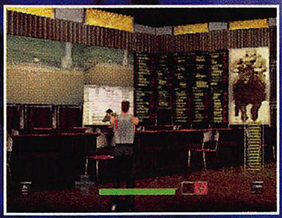
Fox Interactive was all about *The Planet of The Apes* this year. A huge dome cage sat in the center of their booth with a Chuck Heston-wannabe reaching out to unsuspecting patrons. But Fox was all about reviving famed film stars including Ripley from *Alien* and everyone's favorite New York cop, John McClane from *Die Hard* to star in a few of their upcoming games. With a few killer sports titles in the mix and the sequel to *Croc* making a bit of noise, Fox Interactive put on a great show.

FOX Sports NHL Championship 2000
PlayStation



Hockey fans rejoice! This authentic title should wow any true hockey enthusiast with its realistic gameplay and play-by-play analysis.

Die Hard Trilogy 2
PlayStation



John McClane is back once again, this time restoring peace to the City of Sin... Las Vegas. Better enemy AI and three various game engines await players in this awesome new action title... yippie-ki-yay!

FOX Sports Pro Basketball 2000
PlayStation

FOX SPORTS INTERACTIVE

Take it to the hole in this mad B-ball fiesta, featuring realistic player moves and 8-player simultaneous action.

Alien Resurrection
PlayStation



Ripley lives! Battle the dreaded alien race and fight to keep Dr. Wren from delivering alien samples to Earth.

GT

Not exactly the strongest console lineup around, GT did manage to attract many a gamer with a full row consisting of only Driver. Along the same lines, Duke Nukem the game was present, but Duke Nukem the person/mascot was suspiciously absent. It's too bad, because GT missed out on a golden opportunity to flesh out the booth with hot babes in need of rescue. After all, there's only so much you can do with Forty Winks characters. Driver characters would've been cool as well.

40 Winks
PlayStation • N64



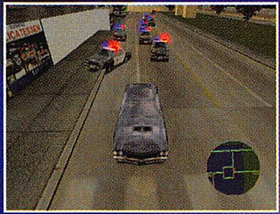
A 3D platformer along the lines of *Banjo Kazooie*, *Forty Winks* will appeal to younger gamers with its easy-to-learn play mechanics, cutesy atmosphere, and scavenger hunt-like gameplay.

Animorphs
PlayStation



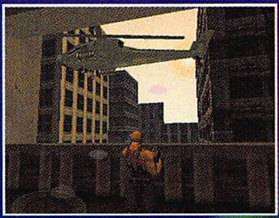
Still very early in development, this game has a huge license and could be very interesting when your character starts morphing into different animals. Tentatively scheduled for March 2000.

Driver
PlayStation



Play the bad guy for a change as an undercover cop who poses as a wheelman for criminals. Run police barricades, help bank robbers escape, and lose the fuzz in a high speed chase. Course, we all know this is just a game... right?

Duke Nukem: Zero Hour
N64

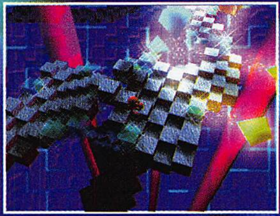


Come get some! Duke's first original N64 adventure drew crowds with 1st person shooter-like gameplay, a 3rd person viewpoint, and 4-player gibfests. No doubt about it... aliens will die, babes will be rescued, and Duke will have you rolling this fall.

Hasbro

Retro-gaming continues with Hasbro's revival of more arcade classics. *Q-bert* and *Pong* are given new console life this year, while *Missile Command* is forthcoming. These games feature original and updated versions of the game with big-time twists. As for original games, *Glover* is making the four-fingered leap from N64 and PC to PS, though the game was available on video only. Hasbro also had a big lineup of PC titles, e-mail games, and a budding sports lineup. And thankfully, there wasn't a new *Monopoly* game!

Q-Bert
PlayStation



The orange hero of old is back! Play either the classic *Q-bert* or the modified, newer levels. You may have to hold the pad at a diagonal, but once you pick it up, you won't stop.

Glover
PlayStation

Last year he brought smiles to many faces with his sugar-coated happy dance on the N64. This year, *Glover* visits Sony's console with his unique blend of 3D platforming, puzzle-solving, ball-dribbling, and enemy bopping.







The Next Tetris
PlayStation

Don't have your fill of *Tetris* already? Well aren't you in luck! *The Next Tetris* offers new features, different shapes, and power-ups that you can use to attack or defend against an opponent. The next step for *Tetris*, indeed.



Pong
PlayStation

Don't laugh! With the zillion additions and modifications to *Pong*, this classic video game looks completely different from the ball and paddle game you're envisioning. Variable surfaces, obstacles, and penguins are just some of the changes you'll see.



Infogrames

Showcasing one of the largest and most varied lineups around, Infogrames covered all genres with their games: 3D platforming, flight sims, puzzle, adventure, and racing. Looney Tunes characters were well-represented in *Lost in Time*, *Taz Express*, and *Duck Dodgers*. While *Supreme Snowboarding*, *V-Rally*, and *Le Mans 24 Hours* should keep racing fans content. There's also opposite extremes of action: *Mission Impossible* on one end, and <yawn> *Eagle One Harrier Attack* on the other. Then there's *Starshot*... and *Lode Runner* is always good... 3D or not.

Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time
PlayStation

Ahh... What's up, Doc? Warner Bros mini games. That's what! Solve puzzles and see some familiar faces as Bugs takes on Marvin the Martian, Yosemite Sam, Elmer Fudd and many others in this 3D adventure.

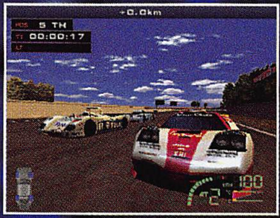


Eagle One: Harrier Attack
PlayStation



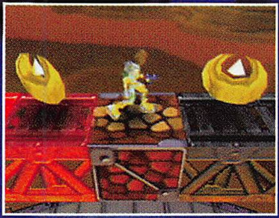
Flight sim fans wake up! Infogrames has a game for you! Boasting a solid game engine and aerial dogfights, *Eagle One Harrier Attack* will keep flight sim fans happy. But not me!

Le Mans 24 Hours
PlayStation



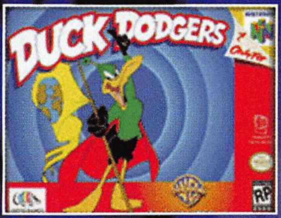
The PlayStation version wasn't available at the show, but the PC rev looked pretty good... which it should, since you'll be going around that track over and over and over again in this endurance race that tests your driving stamina.

Lode Runner 3-D
N64



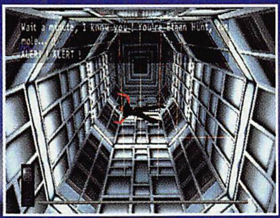
Lode Runner never looked like this... 3D worlds, 18 devices, gold-digging, and a mission to destroy the evil emperor Monk. That classic mix of action/puzzle gameplay is here as well.

Loony Tunes Duck Dodgers
N64



Play the role of Duck Dodgers, Daffy's alter ego, in this action/adventure. Marvin the Martian is set to destroy the universe, and only you can stop him by exploring seven worlds in search of pieces of the PU-36 explosive space modulator.

Mission: Impossible
PlayStation



The hit N64 game comes to the PlayStation. Control Ethan in mission after mission of espionage and trickery. This message will self-destruct in 10 seconds.

Starshot
N64



You have free roam of fully 3D environments in this adventure game with a cartoony look. A very strange game.

Taz Express
N64



"Get a job!" She-Devil (Taz's woman) says. So next thing you know, Taz is delivering crates for Taz Express, in this platformer with a Looney Tunes twist.

V-Rally Edition '99
N64



A track editor and generator give this rally game extra life. Bored with the same tracks? Make your own or have one created on the spot. And don't worry, there's a 4-player multi-player mode as well.

Carmegeddon
PlayStation • N64



Taking the premise of the taxi sequences in "Die Hard Trilogy", Carmegeddon offers lost of roadkill, be it cows or the elderly. Bloodier than any driving game made, Carmegeddon is not for those of weak constitution.

Interplay

Interplays lineup (which comprised mostly of PC titles) was shown behind dark closed doors. Their console lineup showed us nothing new other than Carmegeddon for both the PlayStation and N64. Interplay seems to be doing more titles for PC than console this year. Missing from the showfloor, Interplay had no booth to be shown, not surprsing since they had such a small amount of games planned.

Jaleco

Jaleco USA had a tiny booth in the lower dungeon known as Kentia Hall (which happened to be where the GameFan War Room was found). Not much was shown in Jaleco's shack, though we got our hands on a demo of *Carrier*. Other than that, a rather unspectacular display from Jaleco USA.

Carrier
Dreamcast

Better than *Blue Stinger*? Carrier, a 3d horror/adventure, might be the Resident Evil beater on the Dreamcast. Lots o' weapons, a creepy carrier environment to explore, and some cool special effects make *Carrier* a DC title to watch for.



Kemco

Kemco had a small, but varied lineup. Hard-core gamers will be glad to see the return of *Shadowgate* (a timeless classic), re-emerging on N64. Castle exploration, incredible atmosphere, and puzzle-solving were why the original *Shadowgate* was so popular, and *S64* gives us all that in a 3D world. The *Top Gear* racers continue to flesh out the N64's driving game library. Looming in the distance is *Daikatana*, a potential heavy hitter of a FPS coming next year... or whenever it's done.

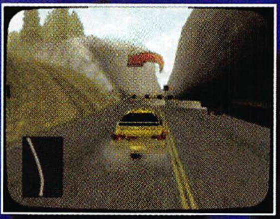
Daikatana
N64

Here's the N64 port of one of the most anticipated FPSs yet. Course, John Romero will actually have to finish *Daikatana* first, so don't hold your breath waiting for it.



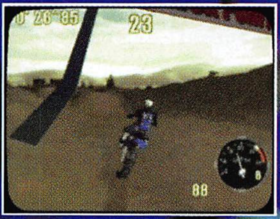
Top Gear Rally 2
N64

Kemco plans to have a big 4th quarter with *Top Gear Rally 2*. Already looking good, this game is still extremely early, but they have secured the American Rally Sport Group license, so you'll see many familiar cars.



Top Gear Hyper-Bike
N64

Street bikes, dirt bikes, motocross... it's all here. Boasting a sweet frame rate and 4-player action, *Top Gear Hyper Bike* has got something for all you motorfiends.



Shadowgate 64: Trials of the Towers
N64

Classic gameplay returns in this adventure game with a strong puzzle element. The 3D graphics give this old game a brand new look and feel. The gates open this summer.







Koei

Though not as big as a Sony or Electronic Arts, Koei always brings something positive to the table. This year, *Winback* is the order of the day. With *Romance of the Three Kingdoms VI* and *Seven Mansions* not due out till next year, the main emphasis right now is on *Winback*, which shows a lot of promise. N64, covert-ops, and adventure all equal big sales for Koei this Christmas.

Winback: Covert Operations
N64

This is the title which Koei's proud of this Christmas season. *Mission Impossible* meets *Metal Gear Solid* in *Winback*, which also features an incredibly smooth 4-player mode. The adventure begins this fall.



Seven Mansions: The Uncanny Grimace

Dreamcast



Control two main characters simultaneously in this Dreamcast adventure, which is still early in production. Multiple story lines, 3D environments, and puzzle-solving all come your way in the summer of 2000.

Romance of the Three Kingdoms VI

PlayStation



A historical strat/sim which allows you to practice resource management and unit control as you unite the land into a powerful empire. Meet all the characters from the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* 1st quarter of 2000.

Airforce Delta

Dreamcast



Boy, Reubus was raving about this one! Slightly more realistic than *Ace Combat, Airforce Delta* plays incredibly smooth, and the graphics? Oh, mama... Console flight sim lovers finally get great graphics to fly by.

Konami

Konami's booth this year paled considerably when compared to last year's. With the thrill of *Metal Gear Solid* and *Silent Hill* gone, Konami's booth relied on quiet games that will no doubt make a huge impact later this year. The big attraction was the *Dance Dance Revolution* arcade machine, which got a large number of onlookers as two players danced off. Pretty hilarious stuff, especially when E C "No Rhythm" M danced off against El "Mexican Hat Dance" Nino.

Castlevania Resurrection

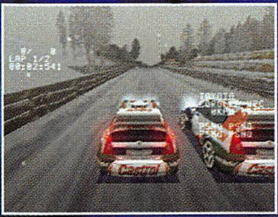
Dreamcast



While it was still very early, *Castlevania Resurrection* looked amazing, and with a female Belmont as the main vampire-hunter, this one looks to set new standards in gaming.

Konami Rally

PlayStation



Still early, *Konami Rally* was blazing with speed at Konami's show floor. An exhilirating sensation of speed, great control, and good visuals make this a solid title.

Suikoden II

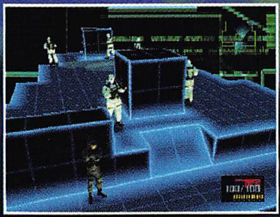
PlayStation



One of the best-loved RPGs on the PSX now has a sequel. Yes, you can gather over 100 members into your party, and yes, it's still in good ol' 2D.

Metal Gear Solid VR Missions

PlayStation



For those *Metal Gear* fans who can't get enough, Konami has heard your cries. With over 400 VR missions and the Cyber Ninja as a playable character, get ready for more tactical espionage action.

Soul of the Samurai

PlayStation



Combine *Resident Evil* mechanics with swords instead of guns, and you've basically got it. Select from a samurai or ninja lady as you purge the evil that has invaded your village.

Vandal Hearts 2

PlayStation



While not playable at Konami's booth, video was shown of this popular Strategy RPG. Thank god it's still in 2D and it looks even better than the first.

LucasArts

All of LucasArts' titles were shown behind closed doors. This would have been exciting, if it wasn't for the fact that we had seen all of the titles before... dating as far back as last E3. There was the *Indiana Jones* title, *Episode One: Racer*, *Phantom Menace*, and the PC RTS title, *Rebel Command*. *Episode One: Racer* was, far and away, the most impressive of the bunch.

Star Wars: Episode One Phantom Menace

PlayStation

The second Star Wars console game of the year is an action adventure which loosely follows the movie's story line. Pushed back from an original May release date to August.



Midway

Midway made another big splash at E3, especially in the form of *Hydro Thunder* on the Dreamcast and N64. Most crowds, however, huddled around the *NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC* arcade machines which feature some of the most realistic graphics in a sports game. And of course, *Ready 2 Rumble* knocked a few gamers on their butts with its humorous overtones and amazing graphics. The high point came from the *Hydro Thunder* arcade tournament, with the winner walking away with an actual sit-down *HT* cabinet... cha - ching ($!!).

Gauntlet Legends

PlayStation • N64

This 4-player fiesta is headed to the N64 and PSX with new levels and plenty of what made the arcade *GL* popular.



Hydro Thunder

Dreamcast

Leave it to the DC to deliver the true arcade *Hydro Thunder* experience at home. Insane stages and fierce competition make for an awesome DC title. The N64 version also looked promising with a solid frame-rate and crisp graphics. Look for a PSX version this Spring.



Jackie Chan's Stunt Master

PlayStation

JCSM looked very early, sporting SD-style characters and *Fighting Force*-like gameplay.



Mortal Kombat: Special Forces

PlayStation • N64

In the vein of *MK Mythologies* comes John Tobias' newest entry into the *MK* world.



MORTAL KOMBAT SPECIAL FORCES



Mortal Kombat Gold

Dreamcast

MK has never looked so good in this awesome DC game. Brilliant colors and the return of some familiar faces should more than satisfy any *MK* fan.



Ready 2 Rumble

Dreamcast

Like *Mike Tyson's Punch-Out*, this game relies heavily on humor. Both the DC, N64, and PSX versions are shaping up to be instant classics.



World Driver Championship

N64



Without a doubt the most realistic racer on the N64. Detailed vehicles and ultra hi-res graphics also complement this killer title.

Blitz 2000

Dreamcast • PlayStation • N64



Again, the DC proves its might in the 'arcade to home' port department. Blazing gameplay and hi-res graphics leave all competition in its wake... except for maybe *NFL 2000*.

Ace Combat 3

PlayStation



Only the elite need apply for this game. More planes, better visuals, and tight control; get ready for some serious supersonic speed.

Namco

Other than the amazing *Soul Calibur* on DC, Namco's booth was devoid of anything really new or exciting. *Pac-Man 3D* was shown, and while there are added gameplay elements, it didn't look drastically different from last year. The GF staff was rather disappointed that there was no announcement of a U.S. version of *Tales of Phantasia*, as well as not being able to play *Dragon Valor* at the show. Dangohead was especially disappointed that Reiko Nagase didn't make an appearance (he still thinks she's real, folks).

Soul Calibur

Dreamcast







Soul Calibur shocked more than its share of E3 attendees, looking superior to its arcade counterpart. Seeing screens and movies of this game do not prepare you for the sheer awe you'll feel upon playing it.

Dragon Valor

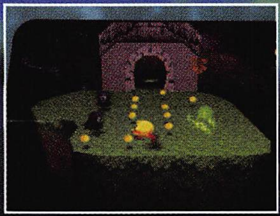
PlayStation



While not playable at the show, video footage showed us what we were hoping for. An Action RPG much like *Brave Fencer Musashi*, *Dragon Valor* features many spells, lots of action, and cool CG intermissions.

Pac-Man 3D

PlayStation



The venerable mascot of Namco enters the 3D realm with a platform title all his own. Shown at last year's E3, let's hope this title comes out sooner... rather than later.

Ridge Racer Type 4

PlayStation







Sure, we know there's over 300 vehicles in this game, the sensation of speed is phenomenal, and track design is excellent. But we also know the real reason why you play this game: Reiko Nagase [ed's note: Hey, who let Dango write this game?].

Natsume

Natsume's section was in the same area as Crave. In fact, many people incorrectly thought that Crave and Natsume had merged! Such was not the case, though perhaps a asino game within a farming game would be a interesting mix. Anyways, most of Natsume's lineup was GameBoy, with only the two following titles playable at the show.

Reel Fishing 2

PlayStation

Real fishing returns with Natsume's rather difficult fishing game. Lots more fish to catch, new tools and upgrades, and all you're missing from this game is a six-pack and the mosquitos.



Harvest Moon 64

N64

The SNES classic makes it to the N64 with so many new features, fans (like El Niño) will be in farming heaven. New upgrades, added cattle animals, and large worlds are just a few of the things this farming/RPG has to offer.







Nintendo

If you're not a big fan of sports games and RTSs, then the only games you cared about at Nintendo's gigantic booth were Rare. *Perfect Dark, Donkey Kong 64*, and *Jet Force Gemini*: a titanic trio of smash titles sure to leave Nintendo fans merry this Christmas. *Episode I: Racer* was also present, along with a life-sized pod racer which hung above the Nintendo sign. Also, a yellow Pokemon car full of merchandise was parked near the front, with a crowd always gathered around it to catch Pokemon fever and the toys Nintendo was throwing out.

Command and Conquer

N64

Nintendo's other real-time strategy game (next to *StarCraft*) will be "moving out" later in the year. Featuring plenty of action, a nice frame-rate, and unit control/production, *C&C* will keep console RTS fans satisfied.



F-1 World Grand Prix II

N64

It ain't exactly *Ridge Racer 64*, but you could do a lot worse (ahem, *Cruisin' USA*). But Formula 1 is, well... Formula 1. If you're a fan of the genre, then stand up and take notice.



Jet Force Gemini

N64

The final Rare game of the show, *JFG* has cute characters, helpful companions, and that patented Rare polish. Play in a variety of modes which include a 4-player deathmatch or a 2-player co-op in this futuristic adventure.



Ken Griffy Jr.'s Slugfest

N64

Junior's second N64 title is a success. Looks and plays great, despite still taking a backseat to *All Star Baseball*.



Kobe Bryant in NBA Courtside 2

N64

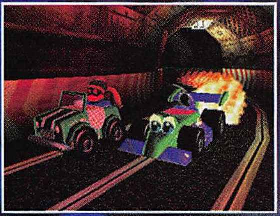
The only basketball game to speak of on the N64 (we don't include *In the Zone*). A solid sophomore effort that cements this as a bankable franchise.



Donkey Kong 64

N64



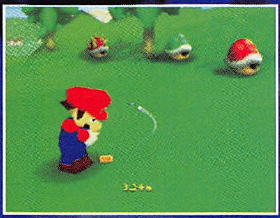




You remember *Donkey Kong Country* on the SNES, right? Well, forget it, cuz *DK64* is coming to town, and when you get a load of the arm-extending, mine cart-racing, banana collecting fun that awaits, you'll bow down to Rare once again.

Mario Golf

N64



The *Hot Shots!* engine in 64-bit glory; what more could you ask for? Arcade fun reminiscent of *NES Golf.*

Mario Artist

N64



The 64-bit update to *Mario Paint* is coming our way, and you can bet it'll be a hot-seller amongst the younger gamers.

Star Wars: Episode One Racer

N64







Fast, fast, fast, fast... that's all that really needs to be said about *Episode One Racer.* Unbelievable speed with an excellent frame rate (on par with *F-Zero X*), *Episode One Racer* should pack in a seat-belt with the game!

Perfect Dark

N64



Rare's answer to *Goldeneye* (the multi-headed beast which they spawned) puts you in the shoes of Joanna Dark, a special agent who uncovers an alien conspiracy. Three words: "*Goldeneye*, but better."

Mini Racer

N64



RC racing in split-screen or a top-down view, with up to four players at a time. Still early, so no release date has been announced yet.

Star Craft

N64







The hit PC game comes home, allowing you to choose from either the Terrans, Zerg, or Protoss. Wage war as either of these three races in a battle for planetary supremacy. Fortunately, all the sounds and speech made the transition to this cartridge game!

Psygnosis

It's sequel-mania in the land of the rising *Wipeout*. *Colony Wars* and *Destruction Derby* were present in video form only, but Psygnosis still had a respectable showing with what was present. *Team Buddies* shows great potential for such an early game; it's got a fun concept, addictive gameplay, and adorable characters. Speaking of team buddies, *Wipeout 3* and *Rollcage Extreme* are poised to rip up the races, with improvements over the last incarnations and more blistering speed. *G-Police: Weapons of Justice* and *Kingsley* also show Psygnosis' versatility.

Colony Wars: Red Sun

PlayStation

Though only available in video form at the show, *Colony Wars* is back with a new mission structure which lets you choose where to take your mercenary character. Side with the Navy or the League in this space adventure, set to come your way March 2000.



Destruction Derby 3

PlayStation

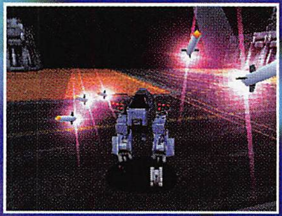
Another video-only game at the show, *DD3* comes crashing through stores Spring of 2000. More multi-player modes, more car models, more Crazy Tracks, and more fender-bashing excitement than your PlayStation can handle!



G-Police: Weapons of Justice

PlayStation

Another *G-Police*? Yeah, why not? Thirty missions of hi-tech justice-spreading, aided by an unhealthy supply of 25 weapons, five vehicles, and buddy support on land or air.



Kingsley

PlayStation

StarFox meets *Zelda*! Just kidding... Kingsley is a cuddly fox who sets out on an adventure to become a True Knight and showdown against the evil Bad Custard. It does play a lot like *Zelda* though...



Rollcage Extreme

PlayStation

Racing on the ceiling has never been this much fun... until now. Taking everything that was good about *Rollcage* and improving upon all its faults, Psygnosis is releasing *Rollcage Extreme* spring of 2000, and it should be better than ever.



T'N'T

PlayStation

Traps, tricks, and treasure await in this Winter '99 release from Psygnosis. Eight characters to choose from, and each comes complete with their own pet to aid you in your trapping exploits. Multi-player mode supports up to four!



Wipeout 3

PlayStation

Seven new weapons, 10 new music tracks, and three new teams (in addition to the old ones). Ready or not, *Wipeout 3* carries on the tradition of being Psygnosis' hottest license yet.



Sega

SEGA definitely put on the best display at this year's E3. There was certainly no disputing the unbelievable Dreamcast lineup that featured AAA title after AAA title; single best console launch in history? Believe it! With a price point of $199 and the modem included, I see only good things in the months to come for SEGA. Also, *Shen Mue* turned major heads and proved that the DC will be a serious contender by the time the PS2 shows up. Now if only they would just bring out *NiGHTS 2*...

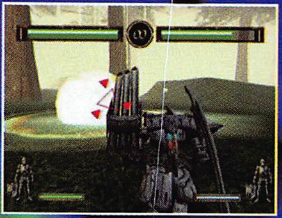
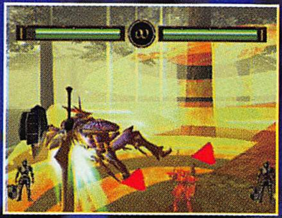
Cart Racing

Dreamcast

A track-oriented racing title from SEGA. Twenty seven official drivers and 17 teams are included in this fast-paced cart racer.

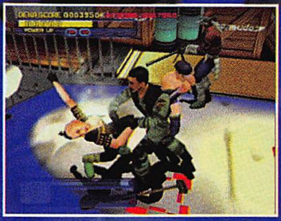


Frame Gride
Dreamcast


A little slower than *Virtual On*, but nonetheless *FG* had excellent visuals and great special effects. Now where's my *VOOT*?

Dynamite Cop
Dreamcast



Dynamite Cop (the sequel to *Die Hard Arcade*) features great action, lots o' weapons, and some of the funniest combos you'll ever see. A great multiplayer game for everyone with a penchant for clobbering.

Metropolis Racer
Dreamcast



A visually stunning racing title with tracks modeled after real locales around the world. Expect realistic car physics and a true sense of speed.

Psychic Force 2012
Dreamcast





Celebrated as the most popular arcade game in Japan, *Psychic Force 2012* is a unique fighting game that combines *Dragon Ball* like missile fighting with *Tekken* close up fist lodging action.

NBA 2000
Dreamcast



An arcade-style sports game that looks very promising. Expect all the teams and players, combined with an ultra-high frame-rate.

NFL 2000
Dreamcast



Motion-capture abounds in Sega's first DC football game. Get ready to be amazed, cause this game cooks!

Pen Pen Trilcelon
Dreamcast

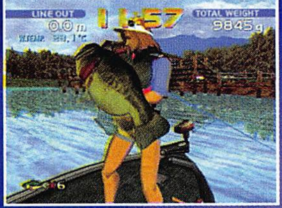




Cute doesn't begin to describe *Pen Pen Trilcelon*. While it was one of the first launch titles in Japan, *Pen Pen* displays incredible visuals, excellent speed, and (for the kids) fruitiness beyond comprehension.

Sega Bass Fishing
Dreamcast

Fishing games don't get much better than this. While not a perfect simulation of the sport, *Sega Bass Fishing* takes away all the boring, tedious elements of fishing, leaving pure fun. The fishing peripheral is awesome.



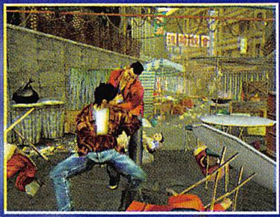
Sega Rally 2
Dreamcast

Easily the best-looking home racer available! Actual rally cars and killer track design make this a must-have for DC owners.

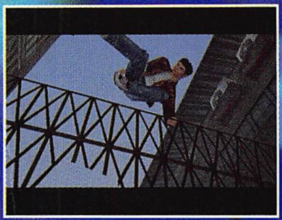


Shen Mue
Dreamcast

Quite simply the most impressive title ever created. Yu Suzuki's finest hour will revolutionize console games as we know it.

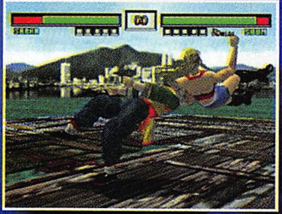






Virtua Fighter 3tb
Dreamcast

Sega's premier fighter debuts and easily replicates the Model 3 experience. Also included is the ability to choose three fighters, a la *King of Fighters*.



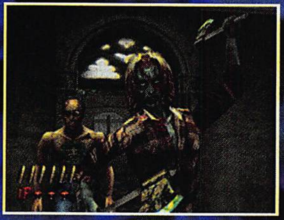
Sonic Adventure
Dreamcast

Sega's flagship game was shown in full force and even sported some cutesy American voice-overs. Small changes were made in the Z-buffering department, but for the most part, the U.S. rev played almost identical to its Japanese counterpart.



The House of the Dead 2
Dreamcast

Based on SEGA's hit arcade series, *HOTD2* is the only light gun game for the Dreamcast. An utterly perfect arcade port showcases the DC's ability to replicate the Naomi hardware.







SNK

Having missed the past three E3 conventions, SNK made a welcome return this year. And while there was a little disappointment that no arcade games were present, SNK showed a strong Neo Geo Color Pocket lineup that detained us for a while at SNK's booth. And with such addictive titles as *Metal Slug - 1st Mission*, *Puyo Puyo*, and *Samurai Shodown 2*, it's easy to see why most of the *GF* staff took "extended" breaks while heading to the SNK booth.

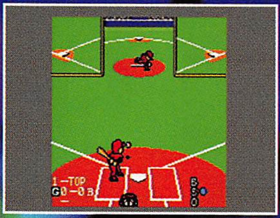
King of Fighters R2
Neo Geo Pocket Color

Oh yeah, baby... *KoF R-2* takes advantage of the color and adds new modes of play. Also features a DC linkup that will allow you to edit fighters!



Baseball Stars Color

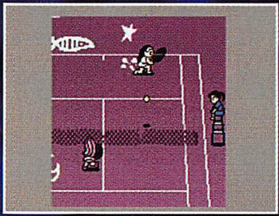
Neo Geo Pocket Color



The classic Neo Geo baseball game comes to the NGPC in full form. Sure, it might not feature the big names in the majors, but it's still a lot of fun for any baseball fan.

Pocket Tennis Color

Neo Geo Pocket Color

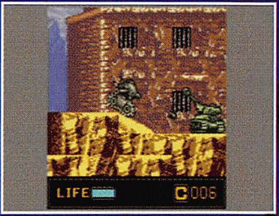


For the longest time, GameFan has been looking for a good tennis game... and it appears on the NGPC?!? *Pocket Tennis* is a fun game that's both easy to play and has enough gameplay for you to keep coming back to.

Metal Slug - First Mission

Neo Geo Pocket Color







Metal Slug on the go! How cool is this? All of the fun of the arcade classic stuffed into the NG Color Pocket, including the groovy vehicles.

Neo Mystery Bonus

Neo Geo Pocket Color



Nothing is more addictive than gambling, and *Neo Mystery Bonus* makes you a winner. Lots of casino games, and the ability to play as five players is another plus.

Neo Geo Cup '98 Plus

Neo Geo Pocket Color



Soccer fans rejoice! *Neo Geo Cup 98 Plus* features large characters, fast gameplay, and a two-player mode! The ability to customize your own teams will make you want to play again and again.

Fatal Fury - 1st Contact

Neo Geo Pocket Color







Most of your favorites from *Real Bout 2* are shrunk down and squeezed into a NG Pocket cartridge. A bit simplified, but still very cool.

Crush Roller Pocket

Neo Geo Pocket Color



Combine *Pac-Man* with *Dig Dug*, and what do you have? *Crush Roller*! A very addictive puzzle game putting you in the role of a glob of paint. Weird? Yes. Fun? YES!

Bust A Move

Neo Geo Pocket Color



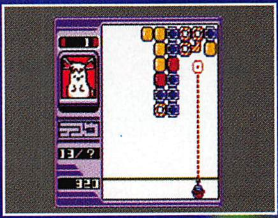
The addictive puzzle game will make a NGPC believer out of you. With renewed graphics and new gameplay modes, this will definitely be on everyone's NGPC game list.

Samurai Shodown 2
Neo Geo Pocket Color



If you're a faithful follower of the *SS* series (before Hyper 64), you have to get this game. Lots of characters and great animation make this a must-buy.

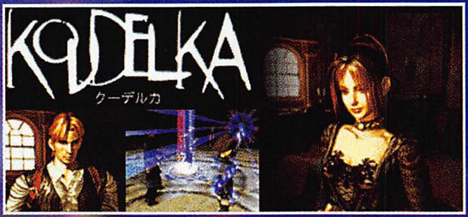
Puyo Puyo
Neo Geo Pocket Color



Bust A Move might have more mainstream acceptance, but *Puyo Puyo* is the puzzle game for the hard-core gamer. The NGPC looks and plays just as well as the arcade.

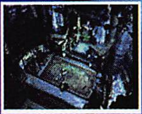
Koudelka
PlayStation

SNK attempts to rival Capcom in the realm of horror adventure. Awesome-looking character designs and interesting concepts... now just pray for a U.S. release on this one.









Sony / 989

Other than the large audience watching the pyramid-like structure where the PSY demos were running, Sony's area was relatively bare compared to the likes of their neighbor, Sega. *Um Jammer Lammy* and *Gran Turismo 2* were drawing the largest crowds; but other than that, there were few games with large crowds. Perhaps it was the lack of anything original, as most of the games at Sony consisted of Japanese ports or sequels.

Ape Escape
PlayStation



Platforming action with both analog pads!? Bright colors, fun gameplay, and bouncy music make this great for kids. Now, as for hard-core gamers...

Bloody Roar II
PlayStation

Bloody Roar was one of the biggest fighting game surprises of last year, and *Bloody Roar II* doesn't let us down with: better graphics, tighter controller, more fighters, and new fighting mechanics.







CTR: Crash Team Racing
PlayStation

While not a huge surprise (Crash was due for a Kart game soon enough), *CTR* is an astoundingly great kart-racing game with all the personality of the Crash universe.



Gran Turismo 2
PlayStation

If it ain't broke, don't fix it, right? *Gran Turismo 2* adds a few graphic niceties but otherwise remains unchanged... which translates into one of the best driving games this year.

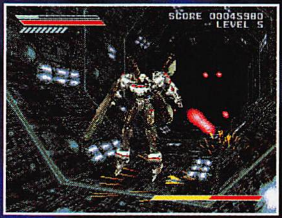


Grandia
PlayStation



While only a video of the game was shown, it displayed all the game's glory on the PlayStation, and even more. So far so good, but let's reserve judgement until we get our hands on a reviewable.

Omega Boost
PlayStation



Mix 3D-shooting visuals from *Colony Wars* with the play mechanics of *Panzer Dragoon*, and you've got Team Andromeda's highly anticipated 3D blast-fest.

Star Ocean: The Second Story
PlayStation







An immense RPG, *Star Ocean: The Second Story* boasts 80 endings, free movement in battle sequences, and an engrossing story. RPG-lovers, don't overlook this one.

Speed Freaks
PlayStation



More kart-racing action on the PSX? While *Speed Freaks* looks fun (featuring limbless drivers a la Rayman), the controls are a bit floaty.

Spyro 2
PlayStation



The lovable dragon returns in an all-new adventure. New attacks and modes of play will leave kids giddy with excitement.

UmJammer Lammy
PlayStation







The sequel to *Parappa the Rapper*, this time around you take control of a guitar-rocking lamb. *Um Jammer Lammy* features twice the zaniness and fun.

Tiny Tank
PlayStation



From the mastermind behind *Chakan* and *Ecco*, *Tiny Tank* puts you in control of a pint-sized robotic tank with an extremely funny attitude problem.

Jet Moto 3
PlayStation



Featuring faster speed and smoother graphics, this game has a few problems in its early stages which should be fixed by the time it ships.

Square

Square had a strong showing, although two of their biggest games weren't playable at the show: *Final Fantasy Anthology* and *Saga Frontier 2*. Regardless, there was always a crowd waiting to get in line at the Square mini-theater. Inside, a 15-minute 'movie' showing off their entire product lineup aired over and over. Most of it was comprised of CG with bits of gameplay meshed in. There was also a surprise at the show with the *Parasite Eve 2* teaser thrown into the 'movie.' *Final Fantasy VIII* was the other noisemaker, drawing crowds to play both the PS and PC versions.

Chocobo's Dungeon 2

PlayStation

It's time to explore randomly-generated dungeons with Square's favorite son, the Chocobo. You'll also run into old friends like Mog, Golem, and Cid.



Chocobo Racing

PlayStation

Mario Kart-style racing with Square characters! Take Chocobo, Mog, and Goblin out for a spin, collecting powerups such as Fire, Ice, Death Sentence. Then unlock hidden characters such as Squall, Cloud, and Aya.



Ehrgeiz

PlayStation

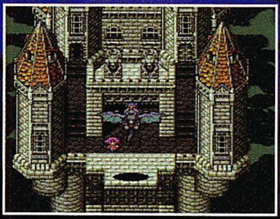
3D free-roaming fighting in Square's first game collaboration with Namco. Lots of flashy combos, yo-yo slinging, and aerial assaults. Another draw is the hidden characters, including many from *Final Fantasy VII*.



Final Fantasy Anthology

PlayStation

We get two *Final Fantasys* in this package: *Final Fantasy ,V* which never came out here, and *Final Fantasy VI*, which was released as *FFII* on the SNES. Plus, there's an additional third disc containing the musical highlights of *V* and *VI*, which wasn't in the Japanese *FF Collection*. Anthology also has new CG intros and endings and a built-in run button!





Final Fantasy VIII

PlayStation

Square's flagship title this year is the latest installment in their tremendously successful *Final Fantasy* series. Breathtaking pre-rendered backgrounds, full-sized polygonal characters, and gorgeous CG movies make this the early front-runner for RPG of the year... in the year of the RPG. And the 3D-accelerated PC version looks even better!



Saga Frontier II

PlayStation

This game's due out early next year, but wasn't playable or on video at the show. Square did have a 15 minute long presentation/movie playing constantly, which had a segment on *Saga Frontier 2*.



Take 2

Appealing to the smaller markets, Take 2 offers something for everybody... if you're a skateboarding fisherman who drives tanks and shoots cops from a Monster Truck. OK, maybe these games aren't for everybody, but at least we're not looking at *GTA4: the Final Felony* or *Earthworm Jim: Cow's Vengeance*. It's a respectable library of non-mainstream titles... which is always good. We're just wondering how long it'll be before we see a music game from Rockstar Games (a branch of Take 2). Hmm, I wonder if *GTA2* was shown behind closed doors because the regular media was looking for <dum da dum> videogame violence! <whistling innocently>

Darkstone

PlayStation

An action RPG with multiple characters that shows a lot of promise. Despite the glut of RPGs on PS this year, there aren't as many action RPGs.



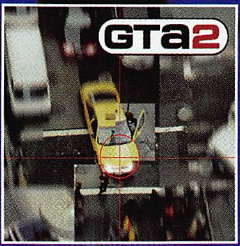
Earthworm Jim 3d
PlayStation • N64





I know what you're all saying, "...it's 3D! Wah!" Well, this game has been totally retooled from what I saw last year; and it looks a lot better already, even though it's 3D.

Grand Theft Auto 2
PlayStation



One of Take 2's most prized franchises, the sequel to last year's crim sim is looking deadlier than ever. Play local gangs against each other, run over more pedestrians than before, and do bad things to the local law enforcement. Just don't let Mom see this one... or Senator Lieberman.

In-Fisherman Bass Hunter 64
N64



Ever wanted to play a fishing game on your N64? ...no? Well now you can! Wait, what do you mean, "no"?!?!

Wild Metal Country
Dreamcast





While the PC version was demoed at the show, this is the one tank-lovers are talking about. Roll around blasting bigger, badder, meaner ships.

Monster Truck Madness
N64



Rednecks and videogames... with the unprecedented success of *Deer Hunter* and wrestling games, developers have found a new market to tap into. Too bad you can't see the Yosemite Sam mudflaps in 1st person mode.

Thrasher: Skate and Destroy
PlayStation • N64

Thrasher magazine... real-life sponsors... real-life locations... real-life boredom on your N64 and PlayStation. OK, some of you may dig the tricks and spins of a skateboarding game, but I would rather practice field sobriety tests alone in my room.

Gallop Racer
PlayStation



In a show where almost every PlayStation game was a sequel, it's refreshing to see Tecmo try something different by bringing *Gallop Racer* to the States. Here's your chance to race **and** breed horses in a 'first of its kind' console horse-racing game.

Tecmo

Other than N64 owners, Tecmo had games for everybody. *Monster Rancher 2* has the potential to be a runaway hit, providing it gets the marketing push which the original never saw. *DoA2* 'rounds' out an impressive fighting game lineup for the Dreamcast; and while the bounce is toned down, the visuals of this game are eye-popping for sure. And word of a new *Ninja Gaiden* game for PSY at launch has many gamers (including Dangohead and Eggo) drooling already. Guess those frothing E-mails to Tecmo worked after all!

Dead or Alive 2
Dreamcast

Shown only in video form at the show, this game continues to impress. The highlight of the clip is when one fighter knocks his opponent through a stained-glass window, jumps out after him, hits the ground in stride, and continues the beating. We were disappointed that it wasn't playable though.





Monster Rancher 2
PlayStation

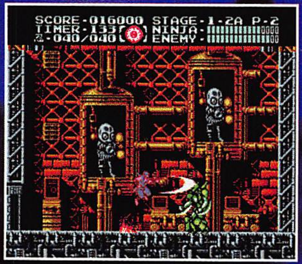
The original *Monster Rancher* was a game which never got the respect it deserved in the U.S. But Tecmo knows a good thing when they see one, so they're giving us a sequel, full of minor improvements, and later a cartoon series, which is coming soon.





Ninja Gaiden
PlayStation 2

•Shots from NES version.





Classic gameplay returns in this adventure game with a strong puzzle element. The 3D graphics give this old game a brand new look and feel. The gates open this summer.

THQ

THQ had a reasonably small booth for their myriad of games ranging from kid-like *Rugrats* to the bloody fighting of *Knights of Carnage*. No themes or babes graced THQ's booth, a surprise for a company of that stature. In any case, THQ's lineup had the same contagious 'sequel mania' which has been going around E3. Also, THQ has resurrected some forgotten games from the 16-bit days, hoping for a return to glory.

Danger Girl
PlayStation

Girl Power? Based off the comic of the same name, *Danger Girl* puts you in charge of three specialized females as they journey through 16 levels, doing battle against the evil Hammer Organization.



Bass Masters Classic: Championship Edition
PlayStation

Featuring real-life fishermen and actual representation of the Bass Master Tournament trail (sound familiar?), this game is only for those people who count fish to sleep.





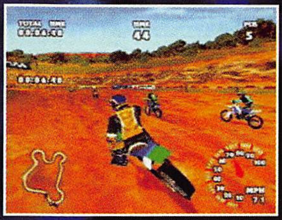


Championship Motocross featuring Ricky Carmichael

PlayStation







Realism doesn't get much closer than this, as this game features every detail of Motocross racing down to the weather conditions.

Rugrats Studio Tour

PlayStation



Four-player multi-player action, 15 different levels, and multiple mini-games; those lovable or unlovable Rugrats are back in an all-new game for kids. And I do mean kids.

Ultimate 8 Ball

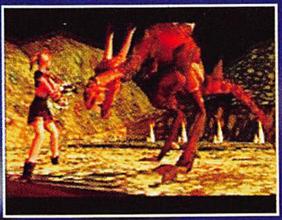
PlayStation



Here's your chance to run the table against the shadiest hustlers in town. With insane pool tables, many game modes, and a final showdown with the Devil himself, *Ultimate 8-Ball* will keep pool sharks amused for days.

Knights of Carnage

PlayStation



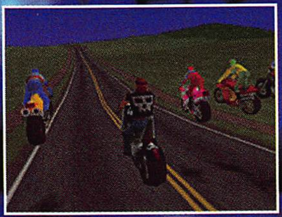




Take control of a valiant knight doing battle against the evil forces that have overtaken the land. Gory graphics, numerous enemies, and 2-player action add to the blood-letting.

Road Rash 64

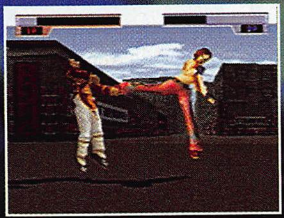
N64



Four-player motorcycle combat racing? One of the most successful titles comes screeching its way onto the N64. But the eternal question still remains: bat or cow prod?

Shao Lin

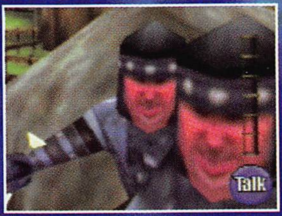
PlayStation



Lode Runner never looked like this... 3D worlds, 18 devices, gold-digging, and a mission to destroy the evil emperor Monk. That classic mix of action/puzzle gameplay is here as well.

Hercules

N64



A hero's needed to return the Titans back to their eternal slumber and free Zeus from his imprisonment? Better call Xena... What do you mean she's busy? Fine, control Hercules and three of his buddies in this adventure.

Titus

Titus may not have had the prettiest games, but the booth babes dressed as Japanese schoolgirls did much to brighten up the visuals. *Evil Zone* and *Superman* are far from exceptional, but both are slated to hit shelves soon. *RC Stunt Chopper* is the big sleeper of the group. A Shiny-developed game, it was shopped over at Midway, and now it's at Titus; assuming this game does come out, it has potential to develop a strong following. *Blues Brothers* and *Xena* are games which can make their money on the license alone.

Xena Warrior Princess
N64

Everyone's favorite warrior princess stars in this fighting game, along with Gabrielle. The battle cry is in, as are a bunch of other *Xena* cast-members. Gameplay is your basic free-roaming 3D fighter.



R/C Stunt Copter
PlayStation

Using both analog sticks, this game will be a favorite of hard-core gamers. Fly a super expensive stunt chopper, but don't worry about crashing it, because it's a lot harder to fly than it looks.



Superman
N64

The Man of Steel debuts on the N64 May 28th! Or so Titus claims, but this title has been hampered by that 'release date sliding' kryptonite. When it comes out, you'll see Jimmy, Lois, and Lex in a 3D Metropolis City adventure.





Evil Zone
PlayStation

A 3D fighter with sword-wielding Japanese schoolgirls? What's wrong with that? OK, maybe the sword-wielding is a little gratuitous...



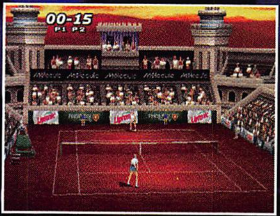


UbiSoft

Well, there certainly doesn't look like there's a dearth of racing games on the U.S. Dreamcast. With titles like *Monaco Grand Prix*, *Speed Devils*, and *Redline Racer* coming out at launch, gamers won't be asking Ubi for another DC racer in a long time. The N64 gets plenty of love too, with *All Star Tennis*, *Wildwaters*, *Tonic Trouble*, and *Rayman 2*. *Rayman* definitely looks like the premiere title for Ubi, with his smiling portrait embossed on their telephone book-sized press kit; he also has a television series in the works, and it looks pretty good so far.

All Star Tennis '99
PlayStation • N64

Take to the court with ATP pros Michael Chang, Jana Novotna, and Richard Krajicek to name a few. Facial expressions, motion-captured moves, and 4-player multi-player on both consoles!



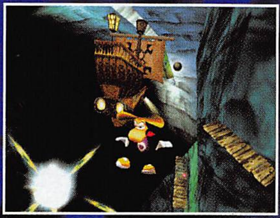
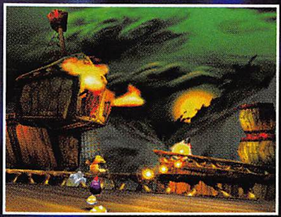
Deep Fighter: The Tsunami Offensive
Dreamcast

Scheduled for release early next year, this title wasn't on the showfloor. It promises underwater dog-fighting, 3D environments which react to your skill level, and customizable submarines.





Rayman 2: The Great Escape
Dreamcast • N64 • PlayStation

Rayman returns; and despite being in 3D now, he still retains those beautiful environments, skillful platforming gameplay, and that zany Ubi sense of humor. A fitting sequel of a brilliant game.

Monaco Grand Prix
Dreamcast • N64 • PlayStation

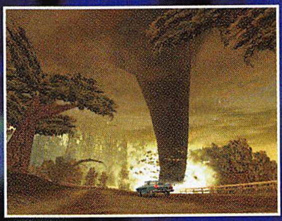




Professional auto racing with 22 cars on the track simultaneously. Weather and road conditions, damage levels on cars, and different pit strategies are just part of the *MGP* experience.

Speed Devils
Dreamcast





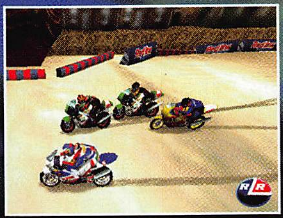
This is probably the best-looking DC racer in Ubi's line-up. Having a very arcadey feel, *Speed Devils* is still early, but stay tuned 'cause it could be huge.

Wildwaters
N64



Ever wanted to kayak down a whitewater river alone? Well now you can without getting wet in Ubi Soft's *Wildwaters*. Six courses, six kayakers, four kayaks, five modes, and split-screen multi-player make up this one-of-a-kind N64 title.

Redline Racer
Dreamcast



Eight superbikes, street and offroad racing, and a very smooth multi-player mode make up *Redline Racer*, Ubi's third DC racer.

Tonic Trouble
N64





Ed's in trouble, and you've got to make things right in the world by jumping platforms, solving puzzles, and eating power-ups on your way to the final showdown with Grogh the Hellish. From the creator of *Rayman*.

Working Designs

Working Designs had a small booth at the show, but what they had to show were all valuable titles. Not only was *Lunar* there, but surprise of surprises, so was *Lunar 2*. Released by the end of the year? That would be too good to be true. *Silhouette Mirage* was there, of course, but so was *Detonator Gauntlet*, a surprise strategy title that mixed giant mechanical armor with a fantasy setting. Not a lot of titles to show off, but it's quality not quantity that counts.

Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete

PlayStation

RPG fans everywhere are waiting anxiously for this beautiful update to the classic SegaCD Game Arts Japanese RPG.





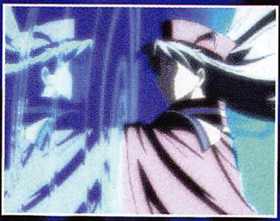


Lunar 2: Eternal Blue

PlayStation

The first isn't out yet, and the second is already coming? Let's hope that it doesn't see similar delays, as it's the better of the two main *Lunar* titles.







Detonator Gauntlet

PlayStation

Rounding out their upcoming lineup is a new strategy game which somewhat resembles *FF Tactics*, but with battles using huge suits of armor (with designs that resemble those from *Five Star Stories*).



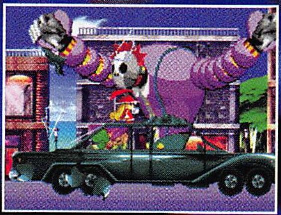




Silhouette Mirage

PlayStation

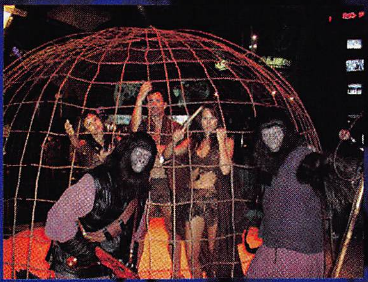
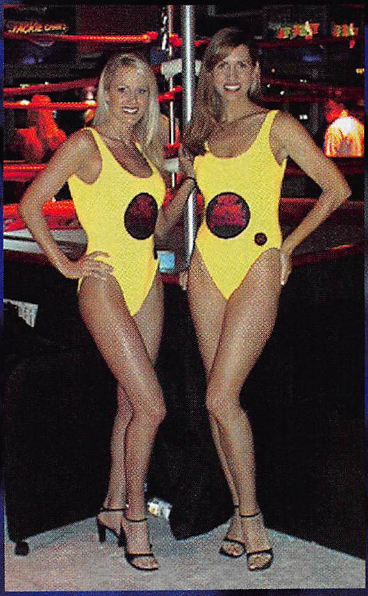
Treasure's odd little action/shooter gets its chance in the U.S., thanks to WD and a PlayStation port. Fans of classic 2D gaming will want to check this one out.



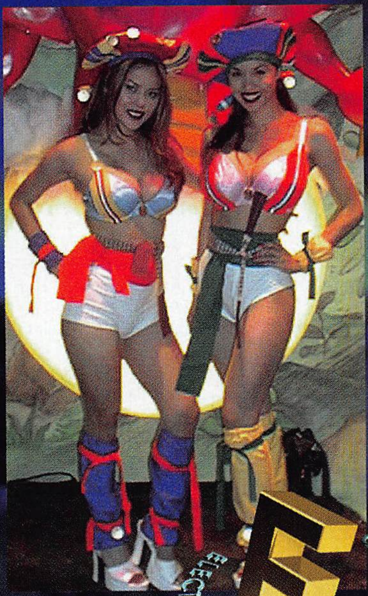
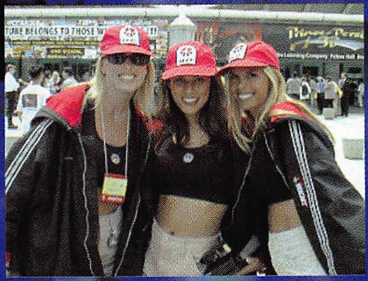
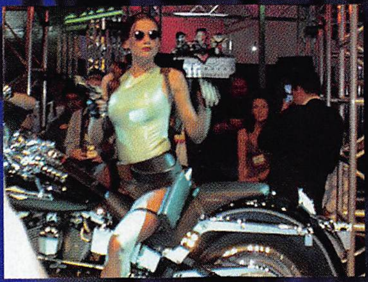




GAMEFAN PRESENTS



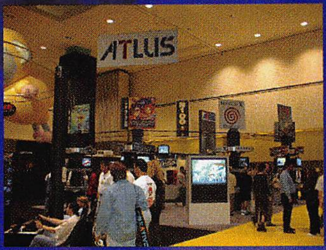





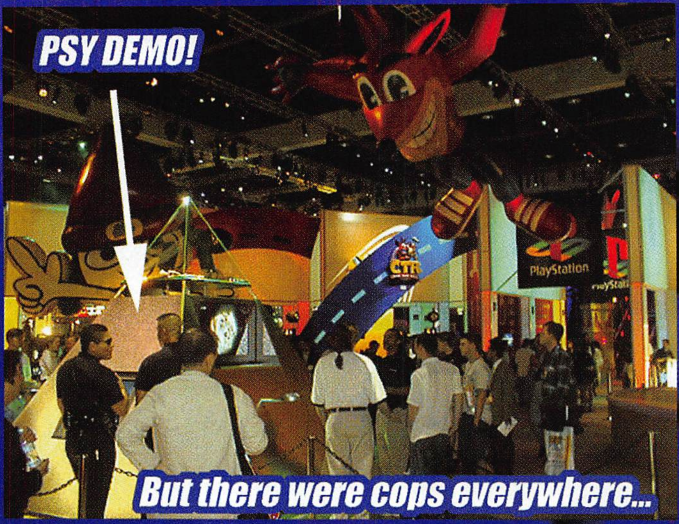
booth babes of E3

[and other interesting tidbits...]

The booths of E3!

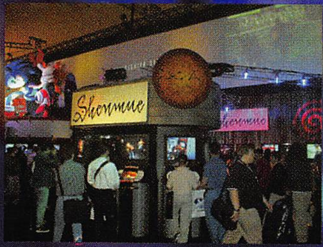




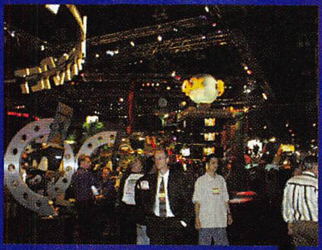








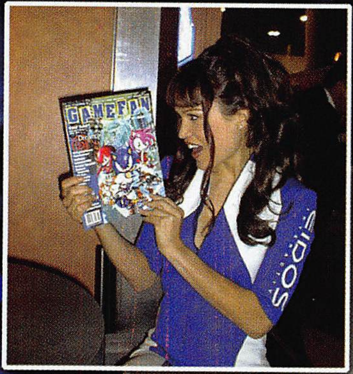






5 questions with Lisa Boyle!!!

Call me a sucker for a good looking lady, but I am a sucker for a good looking lady. And while it's usually hard to just get a private word or two with these bodacious E3 babes, your babe-stricken dango was lucky enough to chat with Eidos lovely, Lisa Boyle. Coming back from last year's E3 (along with Patricia Ford, another Playboy Model), Lisa has been busy with modeling and her acting career (you can see her in *Face/Off*). So while she was taking a break from posing at the Eidos booth, I had the chance to ask her a few questions:





Dango: How do you prepare yourself knowing full well there are hundreds of guys completely staring?
Lisa: Well, I've been modeling for a long time, and I'm used the stares already. To me, it's just my job to go out there and look good. I don't look at as anything more than that.
Dango: Do you play video games?
Lisa: No, I don't... unless you consider the trivia game "You Don't Know Jack" a video game. I really like that game a lot.
Dango: Last year, it was the *Daikatana* theme. This year, it's skin-tight biker suits. If it was up to you, what would next year's theme be?
Lisa: I would really like to do a hip-hop theme... y' know, combat boots or big sneakers, baggy waist hanging jeans, boxers showing out, white tank-top, and a baseball cap backwards. I'd think it would be cute.
Dango: Who would be a better Lara Croft? Patrica [Ford] or you?
Lisa: <looks around> I would. <smiles> I'm not offending Patricia when I say this. We're good friends, but I think I would make a better Lara Croft mainly because I have more acting experience. Plus, I think I could really get into the role of Lara Croft. I could get used to gunning down guys. I'm a pretty violent person when I really want to be.
Dango: What's the worst pick up line you've received at E3?
Lisa: Hmmm... there have been two. I was in the front of the stage taking pictures when both happened. One guy asked me, "So, what are you doing here?" Duh. The other bad one was, "Are you a model?"
Dango: <laughing> Thank you very much, Miss Boyle.
Lisa: You're very welcome.

We here at GameFan would like to thank all the booth babes at E3 for making the show much more, er..um... attractive. On a side note, Dangohead has been suffering from dreams of Lisa Boyle hugging him while he was beating down various *Street Fighter* players in Akibihara. He is currently recovering at the Betty Ford Clinic.

Ecco the Dolphin - DC
Expendable - DC
Frame Gride - DC
Shen Mue - DC
Perfect Dark - N64
NFL 2000 - DC
Powerstone - DC
Ready 2 Rumble - DC
Donkey Kong 64 - N64
0) Metal Slug First Mission - NGPocket

After being subjected to last year's hellish E3 in Atlanta, Georgia I certainly wasn't looking forward to this annum's soiree in Los Angeles. Although I suppose it could have been worse — it could have been in Atlanta...again, <loads gun>. However, I came away from this year's E3 a little bit better for having attended it. Sure, the unbelievable amount of walking, the dread 'E3 flu' rearing its ugly head, and countless people asking me "Are you hiring?" and "Where's Nick Rox?" got old fast, but I persevered (with El Niño lashed to my side) and was rewarded with the best E3 experience to be had in years (though I'm still trying to forget the Eidos party...and I bet Dango's pants are too, <hack>).

If this show is remembered for one thing by the great majority of attendees it will be for the stunning return of Sega as a major player in the video game war for the hearts and minds of gamers everywhere — a battle which was handily won by the house that *Sonic* built. One look at my top ten games will give you a very clear impression of where I think the hot games are going to be in the next six months and beyond. I've been dreaming of *Ecco* nightly since first seeing it (if even only as a running demo) with its fabulously modeled dolphin and glorious, simply unbelievable environs. *Expendable* finally making good on the prospect of a next-gen *Contra* (started by *One* and *Apocalypse*) with blazing effects and nothing short of total carnage coming from all corners at all times. *Frame Gride* proving that there is more to the mech fighting genre than *Virtual On* with fantastic mech designs that shame even Hajime Katoki's *VOOT* warriors (believe it, Dango). And of course *Shen Mue* is as true a testament of the absolute graphical force of Sega's newest hardware, with 'facial' demos that leveled the 'old man' demo on PSY with true light sourcing and individually rendered hairs; this will surely be Yu Suzuki's masterwork. Though available for months on import, *Powerstone* received more than its fair share of attention and came out as my pick for fighting game of the show (yes, even over Namco's *Soul Calibur*). Rounding out the Sega pack, the sports game for gamers that don't play sports games, Sega/VC's *NFL 2000* — don't call it a *Madden* clone! To say it was Sega's show would be like saying GameFan isn't about gaming — there was **no** refuting it.

ECM's Top 10

And while Sega clearly owned the show and the mind of any gamer that entered their massive encampment, it was quite clear that Nintendo wasn't going to take it lying down. For starters, while there were almost no internally-developed titles at the show, when you've got Rare, do you really need anything else? Easily the most played game at the Nintendo booth was Rare's *Perfect Dark*, the seemingly perfect follow-up to *GoldenEye*. Although the game featured all the action and excitement you'd expect from the true heir to the *GoldenEye* legacy, it was the addition of GameBoy Camera compatibility that put this one over the top. Capture a photo on your GameBoy Camera, transfer it via the Pokemon Stadium Transfer Pak to your N64 and voila! run and gun your friends to your heart's content (think Senator Lieberman in your sniper sight!). Following closely on PD's heels was *Donkey Kong 64* (also by Rare), the first Expansion Pak-required game (it'll be packed in with **every** copy at **no** extra charge). Take control of Donkey Kong and other members of his simian crew traipsing across huge 3D worlds the likes of which are only exceeded by Sega's *Sonic Adventure*. Other than that, Nintendo had a couple of other noteworthy titles with *Jet Force Gemini* (Rare again!) and *Mario Golf* (by Camelot) but this show was mainly about *PD* and *DK64*.

Last, but not least (well, maybe for this show) was the showing PlayStation put forth. If there is one phrase to characterize Sony this year, it's 'sequel machine'. Originality took a long walk off a short pier at this year's E3 for Sony and company. If it wasn't Sony doing a sequel, it was Capcom, Konami, or any number of other developers. The sole major entry from Sony in the form of the '3 years in development' *Ape Escape* seem to be a bit misguided and with not much else to 'wow' the crowds it fell to the LAPD-protected PSY demo to keep Sony form being lost in the shuffle. Oh, and despite what you've read elsewhere it was **far** from earth-shattering, impressive, or any other really positive adjectives you could come up with (who could possibly expect something completed in about 7 days to be that impressive is beyond me).

All in all, a fairly stunning show, though I'd hoped for a bit more from the Sony side of the universe. OH, and lest I forget, it's time you all walked out and shelled out the cash for a Neo Geo Pocket Color, as I had more fun with its games than anything available for GameBoy or Sony, <snicker>. Make sure you get one with *Metal Slug* and *Crush Roller* — gaming nirvana! And on a parting note, I'd like to thank all the rabid readers and gamers out there that came up and spoke a flood of kind words about GF in general. In addition to feeding our egos, it's good to know that the enthusiast gamer is still alive and well. A very special thanks also goes out to all the gamers that cheered Dangohead and myself to victory in the *Powerstone* press tourney!

Editor's Top Ten

Eggo's Top 10

1) Rayman 2 (N64, DC, PC)
2) Final Fantasy VIII (PS, PC)
3) Monster Rancher 2 (PS)
4) Perfect Dark (N64)
5) Sonic Adventure (DC)
6) Resident Evil 3: Nemesis (PS)
7) D2 (DC)
8) Gran Turismo 2 (PS)
9) Star Ocean: The Second Story (PS)
10) Soul Calibur (DC, Arcade)

Overall, I enjoyed this year's E3 more than last year's because there were a lot more good games; though there weren't as many great games, like the *Zeldas* or *Metal Gears* from last year. Most editors were hard-pressed to find a PS game to rise above the rest, especially in the land of sequels. Nintendo had a triple dose of Rare-inspired excitement, and the news of their next-generation Dolphin system shook the industry before E3 even started. Sega was big, as they needed to be — a large booth, great games, and best of all... they brought fabulous news: confirmation that the U.S. Dreamcast will retail for $199 with the modem included.

Rayman 2 tops my list because it, like *Sonic Adventure*, is one of those games which has gorgeous 3D graphics **and** solid 2D-ish gameplay. *Final Fantasy VIII* looks great, and with 3D acceleration on your PC, it looks phenomenal. *Perfect Dark* is poised to receive the torch from *GoldenEye* (after being the #1 selling console game two years in a row). And, for the first time, I saw a game which looks noticeably better at home than in the arcade... *Soul Calibur*.

In case you're wondering why *Shen Mue* isn't listed in my top 10, it's because I'm disappointed with what was shown at E3. The hype behind this game was that it would be a life-changing experience, and what I saw was far from that: a tech demo of faces, a dart-throwing mini-game, and the Quick Time Battle which lasted about a minute and played like *Dragon's Lair*. Fun, yes... life-changing, no. I'm still reserving judgement till something with more 'game' rolls around.

PC-wise, there were many games to look forward to. *Quake III*, *Theme Park World*, and *The Sims* were impressive. *Quake III* I expected; but the other two came out of nowhere. *Theme Park World* is a solid answer to Hasbro's *Rollercoaster Tycoon*, but with less sim elements. *The Sims* is a modern day *Little Computer People*, but you can have more than one Sim... imagine a whole town of them.

Next-generation systems played a big role in the headlines, but vaporware didn't have a huge impact at the show. The PlayStation 2 was at the show, in a pyramid-shaped cabinet with screens on every side, and LAPD guarding every corner. Talk about security! Argh!! My evil plan to steal those tech demos... all for naught! And I would have gotten away with it if it weren't for those meddling kids!

One part of E3 which was depressing was the lack of 2D games. There were sprites in *Theme Park World*, but everywhere I turned, it was the Polygon Menace ruling the world. I was given some hope, however, when talking to members of the *Rayman 2* team. I won't name names, but they were upset that *Rayman* was making the leap from 2D to 3D in *Rayman 2*. 2D will not go quietly into the night...

Also worth mentioning is the Sony party at Sony Studios in Culver City. Held in a couple warehouse-sized buildings, it was a HUGE event. The number of people there was staggering, as was the Sony presentation midway through. With bass loud enough to rumble the floor, Sony recapped the history of the PlayStation — showing off early games through the years, and counting up to the mind-numbing 50 million units sold. The presentation ended with the PSY tech demos: *Final Fantasy VIII*'s ballroom scene rendered with real-time graphics, along with the cop from *Silent Hill*, and Namco's Reiko Nagase. Afterwards, Beck performed, and the party rolled on into the early morning hours.

The only problem with E3 this year was the post-show flu. With four straight days of partying, miles of walking to and from appointments, a diet of finger foods, and a pathetic lack of sleep, it's no wonder that many of us are under the weather. Then you factor in waiting in line for *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* during some criminal morning hours... Ugh, more than half our staff, including yours truly, are currently sick, but that doesn't stop me from talking about E3 with a big smile and fond memories.

el niño's top 10

1) NFL 2000 (DC)
2) Ecco the Dolphin (DC)
3) Ready To Rumble (DC)
4) Soul Calibur (DC)Dreamcast
5) Monster Rancher 2 (PS)
6) Perfect Dark (N64)
7) Dino Crisis (PS)
8) Resident Evil: CV (DC)
9) NBA 2000 (DC)
10) Rayman 2 (N64, DC, PC)

I think you can tell by my Top Ten list what made the biggest impact on me at the show. This year's E3 was about the Sega Dreamcast and nothing else. While Sony was all about sequels and tech demos of non-existent machines and Nintendo was about nothing except Rare, Sega came to play. Even for someone as completely jaded as myself, I was awed by the games I saw — and I don't just mean the graphics. There was an abundance of great playing 128-bit titles to choose from. *NFL 2000* and *Ready To Rumble* were the cream of the crop for overall gameplay bliss. Running demos of *Ecco*, *Alone In the Dark 4*, and *Castlevania* gave me shivers. How can people even begin to think that the Dreamcast won't succeed?

Although I had seen it before, *Tony Hawk Pro Skating* made me pause for a bit of play, as well as *Mortal Kombat Gold*. One really cool title I saw was from Empire. It hasn't been approved by Sony yet, but it is called *Sheep* and looks as though it could be a great niche game. Let's hope it doesn't get Heisman-ed by SCEA. They've already screwed U.S. gamers out of *Poy Poy 2* though, so I fear for this little gem.

Once again, I was distressed by the lack of good RPGs for any system. While I'm ecstatic to see *Baldur's Gate* come to the Dreamcast, the only other notables were *Suikoden 2*, *Jade Cocoon*, *Star Ocean: The Second Story*, and *Harvest Moon 64* — oh yeah, and *FF8*. Are sequels the best we can hope for, nowadays?

ECM wouldn't let me mention them in my Top Ten list, but there are some fantastic PC titles coming our way. EA and Westwood studios have some of the best and brightest, with *C&C: Tiberian Sun*, *Nox*, and *The Sims*. In *The Sims*, you actually get to play the game as a typical suburban person: getting a job, having a family, and buying furniture! Sounds weird, but it looks great.

Also out there is another *Civilization*, from Microprose. This one is called *Civ: Test of Time* and looks to be the Civ sequel we have all been wishing for (even better than *Call To Power* and *Alpha Centauri*!). Other great PC titles were *Theme Park World*, *Quake III*, *Unreal Tourney* and *Torment*. Noticeably missing was another Microprose *Pirates!* game. I wonder how long it will be before Eggo's and my pleas are finally answered. If you are listening, Hasbro/Microprose, give a little something for the people. Give us a new *Pirates!*

When you talk E3, you're talking parties. This year (as it is every year) the buzz surrounded Eidos and Sony. Playing the Eidos shindig was Everclear, whom I personally hate, but they didn't ruin the evening. The one disappointment was finding out David Bowie would not be appearing. Eidos wrecked many a person's E3 by throwing their party the night before commencement. Never have I seen so many walking dead, following a party. Oh, the evils of the drink. May I never touch the stuff again...

...That is, until Friday night when Sony decided to throw its gala event. Beck played at this show, but I got there too late to see the whole set. It was at Sony Studios (only a mile or so from my apartment, thank God), and they pulled out all the stops. Never have I seen so many walking dead, following a party. Oh the evils of the drink. May I never touch the stuff again...

...Saturday I went to bed early after returning from the show. Then, I had happy dreams of the best E3 in three years.

editor's top ten

dangohead's top 10

1) Soul Calibur - DC
2) Samurai Shodown 2 - NGPC
3) Frame Gride - DC
4) Ready To Rumble - DC
5) Tribes 2 - PC
6) Quake III - PC
7) Suikoden II - PSX
8) NFL 2000 - DC
9) Street Figher 3: Third Strike - Arcade
10) Metal Slug: 1st Mission – NGPC

Far away from the muggy, sweaty pit of Hotlanta, this year's E3 had a welcome change of venue, hosted in the comfy confines of Los Angeles. Not only was this good because of the weather, it was very convenient to go straight home after a hard day's work at the Expo. Despite what you envision E3 to be, it isn't about playing the hottest games while having lovely models massage your shoulders. Nope, it's all about getting FREE STUFF!

In all seriousness, this year's E3 was a lot of work for this dango. Though most of my exhaustion didn't come from playing video games, talking to PR representatives, or explaining what is up with my head. Nay, all my strength was sapped from walking to and from the large number of booths. Maybe it's my old age, but I was extremely tired every time I had to walk from the *GameFan* war room, to the South Hall (located near the main entrance), all the way to the West Hall (located somewhere near Hawaii). While I saw almost everything I wanted to, there were so many companies displaying their wares this year that, in all honesty, I couldn't go to every booth at E3.

Okay, on to the question that you've all been waiting for... How were the booth babes this year? Well, there were definitely MORE booth babes, ranging from the classic Playboy models in skin-tight motorcycle suits at Eidos, to the Fembots (from *Austin Powers*) of Sierra's floor, to the ladies dressed in school uniforms at *G.O.D.* And while I am usually immune to the wooing effects of said booth babes, who isn't a sucker for a pretty face? Well, I quickly became the sucker when introduced to the lovely Lisa Boyle, a former Playboy model, who was also in the movie *Face/Off*. I was surprised about two things when I met her: (1) she had a great sense of humo and (2) she thought she was getting fat. I scoffed at the thought of her getting fat and said her beauty was as untouchable as her breasts. This o course prompted a slap in the face. My excuse? I was so entranced by he stunning good looks that I couldn't tell a lie. Oh well...

Since I'm running out of space, I'll jump into my highlights of the show Now call me a *Metal Gear Solid* freak, but I am really excited about *Meta Gear Solid VR Missions*. Sure, 400 VR missions may seem a bit tedious, but I welcome the challenge. Also, the ability to play as the Cyber Ninja gave me goosebumps as I gazed over the video of *Metal Gear Solid VF Missions*. The DC *Soul Calibur* is, without a doubt, better than the arcade, something that I found hard to fathom. It was great to see SNK at E3, after three years of being a no-show. And SNK had a strong lineup of games for their Neo Geo Pocket Color as well as a video demo of their upcoming action/adventure for the PlayStation called *Koudelka*. Rounding out the highlight list was Capcom, which had a great line of arcade and console games. The only thing I didn't like from Capcom was *Strider 2*. While we have kicked and screamed for a new *Strider* for a very long time, the early version they had running at Capcom's booth was... well... oh, I won't even get into it. Let's just hope that Capcom can fix it up in time.

Perhaps the biggest highlight for me (aside from stomping the competition in the *Power Stone* tournament) was getting a lot of positive feedback from everyone at the show about *GameFan*. Whether it was Sega (who had positively the best games) or Joe-Schmoe selling unnecessary video game peripherals, I was stopped quite often with comments like, "You're from *GameFan*?! You rock, dude!" Moreover, I especially valued the comments of our peers and readers who came by our war room/broom closet to say a few kind words... while grabbing a stack of free magazines. It's a great feeling to know that there are people who still appreciate the work that we put into making the best video game magazine around. So, a big thanks goes to all those readers who I met at E3. Now before I get all teary-eyed <SNIFF>, here is my top ten games of E3.

) Perfect Dark (N64)
) Shen Mue (DC)
) Ecco The Dolphin (DC)
) Gran Turismo 2 (PSX)
) Quake III (PC)
) Resident Evil 2 (N64)
) Dynamite Cop 2 (DC)
) BoomBots (PSX)
) Expendable (DC)
0) Spawn (Arcade)

I knew from the get-go that I would be disappointed with this year's 3. In a sea of fading consoles, there was little to get worked up over esides the Dreamcast. I wandered the show floor desperately seeking quality products, but sadly found very little. There were, of ourse, the expected showstoppers like *Perfect Dark* and *Shen Mue*, ut the reality was that these gaming behemoths were simply too few nd far between.

It seemed that this year the emphasis was put on sequels rather than ompletely original titles. *Gran Turismo 2, Tomba 2, Resident Evil 3, Um Jammer Lammy*... are ya noticing a certain trend here, folks?! I'd ke to call *Dino Crisis* an original game, but alas, it's nothing more han *RE* with dinos substituted for zombies... a nice game in its own ight, but definitely not original.

Even Sega's booth left much to be desired. Perhaps if this was my irst run-in with the DC, I would have been far more excited, but I've een playing Sega's super console for months. Many of the games *Sonic, HOTD2, Sega Rally 2*) provided me with nothing but distant memories... I still prefer the Japanese voices in *SA* to the cutesy chatter that is the American voice-overs. Also, and I don't care what other aded mag editors have said about *Shen Mue*, this game is truly unbelievable. Graphically it has NO equal, and the gameplay... why is veryone dogging the gameplay? If you're not keen on the *Dragon's Lair*-style combat, then what about the free battle mode, people? Although this style was not playable, you can only imagine how mazing it will be... this is a Yu Suzuki game we're talking about — ave faith!)

fury's top 10

This was the only year that I can remember the Big "N" showcasing not a single in-house title (not including Rare games). This can luckily be perceived as a good thing due to Nintendo's recent N2000 announcement. But what will become of the aging N64... who really cares when we're talking about a 400 MHz Nintendo machine! I, for one, am glad they're focusing all energies on this new hardware. Also because of LucasArts' *Episode I: Racer*, Nintendo had on display a near identical replica of a pod racer. If this was not an actual prop from the film, then I for one was certainly fooled... and who says I'm starved for anything *Phantom Menace* related?

Sony made a rather uninspiring appearance at E3. I was seriously disappointed with *Ape Escape* and found it odd that SCEA was putting so much emphasis on this title. *Omega Boost* was looking like one of Sony's bigger contenders, but I was turned off by the *Panzer*-like gameplay... if it doesn't say Team Andromeda in the opening credits, I for one ain't buying. And what of the PS2, you ask? Well, surrounded by armed LAPD officers sat the playable *Gran Turismo* PS2 demo. It looked amazing but delivered nothing I couldn't foresee appearing on the DC. I am going to wait till I own a PS2 to make any real judgements.

I found the real show surprises to come in the form of *Strider 2* (arcade) and *Ecco* on the DC. As much as I wanted to love Strider's return to gaming, I was left cringing in a corner muttering the words "Why?!?! Who's to blame for this cursed mess!?" *Ecco*, on the other hand, looked fabulous... for an early demo that is. Although not being programmed by Ed Anunziata (the creator of *Ecco* and *Chakan*), it featured sickeningly amazing dolphin animations and enormous environments... Ed would be proud!

While this year's E3 was among my least favorites, I was still pleased to again be reminded that our industry is fast becoming one of the largest and most spectacular businesses on the planet. In closing, I would just like to add that I'm sure glad E3 comes but once a year... sleep deprivation is bad, m'kay? See ya next year!

editor's top ten

shidoshi's top 10

1) Dead or Alive 2 (DC)
2) Soul Calibur (DC)
3) Thousand Arms (PS)
4) Jade Cocoon (PS)
5) Shen Mue (DC)
6) Tail Concerto (PS)
7) Ecco (DC)
8) Misadventures of Tron Bonne (PS)
9) Resident Evil: Code Veronica (DC)
10) Harvest Moon 64 (N64)

Waaii! Shidoshi's first E3! To me, the show was both good and bad. There were a number of great looking games to be found, but most were either 'not my thing' or showed little in the way of innovation. In fact, I might have totally given up on the gaming scene had it not been for a few awesome Japanese titles coming out very soon. Still, I **did** get to go to E3, which was worth the price of my plane ticket to Cali.

Other than my picks for best of the show, I wasn't really blown away by much. Nintendo had a somewhat weak showing, with *Perfect Dark* and *Pokemon Snap* being the only two games I really cared about. No *Metroid 64* makes Shidoshi an unhappy boy.

On Sony's side, the games I most wanted were games I've already played — *UmJammer Lammy* and *Final Fantasy VIII*. There were just one too many sequels. And while I have to admit I was happy to see *Tomba 2*, the new and different look left me feeling a bit uncertain. They DID have those two little PSY demos, but I'm an older and wiser gamer now, and have learned not to let myself be swayed by such early demos of a system. No, for me, most of my time and attention went to the smaller companies and to Sega's Dreamcast lineup.

The Dreamcast needed to prove itself at this show, and prove itself it did; even the games I normally wouldn't care about made me stop and take a look. If sports games are what a console needs to win America, the Dreamcast is sitting pretty. Then, you've got the likes of *Shen Mue, Soul Calibur, Metropolis*, and the big surprise, *Ecco* (I smile just thinking about that one). This is first-gen stuff, folks, and if you still question if the Dreamcast has power after seeing these, well... I'd better stop there. On a related topic, there was *Dead or Alive 2* — no matter how many clips or screenshots you've seen, NOTHING prepares you for the actual game. That's only one Naomi board? We might see that at home? Shocking, simply shocking...

Atlus is shaping up to be one of my favorite U.S. game companies, because they bring over all of the wacky Japanese games that I adore. Not only are we getting *Thousand Arms* (a dating sim RPG in English!), but they actually picked up *Tail Concerto*, which I had given up on seeing. Now the big question is *Persona 2* — if I don't get this game in English, well... it won't be pretty [ed's note: Hell hath no fury like a Shidoshi scorned]. Then there's the *Misadventures of Tron Bonne*, a game I give Capcom TOTAL props for bringing to the U.S. Capcom also brings yet more horror, with *Code Veronica* looking damn slick. And *Harvest Moon 64* — a 64-bit farming RPG! Laugh if you want, but I'll be all over that one.

I do have to say that I was a bit disappointed with Sega, specifically in their handling of the Dreamcast. Not in the actual system or its games, mind you, but in the excitement for the system. I expected to go to the show and see Dreamcast goods loaded to the sky, cute DC girls downloading VMS minigames and handing out t-shirts and stickers and anything else for people to show their support for this wonderful system. Where was the building and strengthening of the Dreamcast fanbase? Where were the things to help us Dreamcast lovers show said love for the system? I mean, I even offered to buy a Dreamcast shirt off of a few Sega people with no luck. I guess the "grassroots" fanbase mentality is something far more Japanese than American, and E3 is more of a 'selling the product, not the fan support' mentality, and that's where I made my mistaken assumption. If Sega wants the DC to fly, they should be building its strength in every way possible.

In the end, going to a show this big and seeing so many games is a bit disheartening, because you see just how little originality is out there and how many games are simply rehashes. Sure, I'll snatch up some of said games, but I wish there was more creativity and inspiration out there. Bigger, louder, prettier — they're all nice, but in the end they leave you feeling a bit empty [ed's note: We've now given Shidoshi his own key to the jaded gamers executive washroom].

Dino Crisis playstation

developer: capcom publisher: capcom

Move over *Jurassic Park*! From the creators of *Resident Evil*, Capcom delivers another suspenseful adventure on the PSX. A crazy, genius scientist has been performing some mysterious experiments on Ibis Island. As a member of a secret government task force, you control Regina as she journeys through the jungles, underground caverns, and secret laboratories, while dealing with dangerous raptors and flesh-eating dinosaurs. While the gameplay may seem similar to *Resident Evil*, *Dino Crisis* looks better and features a completely different story.

The dinosaurs in the game have incredibly life-like animation, and when they attack... well, people faint of heart might wanna look away. If you thought *Resident Evil 2* was gory, this game makes it look like a Disney movie. Blood trails soak the floor when you're wounded, and dinosaurs don't simply attack out of hunger. Some will stalk, and even toy with their victims before beginning dismemberment. If you think you've seen it all and have the heart of a lion, you might be shocked by that warm, wet feeling in your undies after a few hours of this game. Set to launch in August, get ready for another monstrous, thrilling adventure from Capcom.





GameFan's Top Ten



Few games captured the imagination like Sega's *Ecco the Dolphin* and its follow-up, *Ecco the Tides of Time*. In fact, it was among the only titles in Sega of America's history to be extremely successful both in the USA and Japan. So why it dropped off the face of the earth and never made an appearance on Saturn is anyone's guess (probably from the same crew that decided the SS didn't need its own 'real' *Sonic* game), but that matter has been completely rectified on DC.

In fact, of all the games at the recent E3, Ecco proved to be the single most graphically spectacular title at the show. Superior to even Sega's *Shen Mue* on the console side and all comers on the PC side, *Ecco* (running as a real-time tech demo) was simply one of the most breathtaking things ever witnessed by the staff of GameFan. In fact, if the frame rate issues are rectified (the 'game' chugged along at 15 FPS, best-case) this may be just the title Sega needs to combat the coming of PSY and Nintendo's Dolphin (hmmm..).

The demo featured Ecco singing to other sea life and basically engaging in the various activities that made him a superstar on Genesis. In fact, ECM nearly burst into tears the second he spied him on the show floor, across from *Shun Mue*. One of the more spectacular sequences showcased Ecco swimming into a massive cathedral of sorts, replete with gold dolphins buttressing an altar, replete with a full display of DC's particle system handling capabilities.

Needless to say, this game had the entire GF staff worked up. If there's one game we'll be keeping an extremely close eye in the coming months, it's this one.



ecco dreamcast

developer: appaloosa publisher: sega

dreamcast **expendable**

developer: rage software publisher: sega

Of all the games released on PlayStation in its almost four year career, one of the most overlooked titles would have to be ASC/Visual Concepts' *One*. Featuring gameplay reminiscent of the venerable *Contra* series, but in full 3D, this one-man-against-the-world blast-fest captured more than its fair share of play-time when it burst into the GF offices in late '97. However, it died a quick death at retail and at the hands of other 'pro-zines' (not sure what these guys would consider a 'good' game). Which makes *Expendable* all the more curious, for at its core *Expendable* is a little more than just 'inspired' by *One*.

Armed with all manner of implements of destruction, *Expendable* takes all the elements that *One* featured and cuts loose on the Dreamcast. The result? An unmatched *Contra*-esque experience destined to be one of the first titles available this fall.

While it's true that in the past Rage Software (Expendable's developer) has been better known for their ability to craft blazing engines (a malady that also afflicted the late, lamented *Scavenger*) this should prove to finally be a break-out hit for them (Incoming, also on DC, was coded by Rage).

Word on the street says that it could be done in time for launch, but we're guessing it'll be held back to shore up Sega's October offerings with a rocket-launcher blast to the cortex.





GAMEFAN'S TOP TEN







One of the most underappreciated Sony games, *Gran Turismo* sold a boatload... over two million copies to be exact. Great graphics, frame-rate, replay value, realism, customizing, and difficulty (I just want my driver's license!) — it was the total package.

Well now it's time for the much-anticipated sequel, and everything's back, and better than ever. Over 400 cars are at your disposal, including the '99 Beetle; that's more than twice as many cars as the last game. Plus, 20 tracks to race on, which is almost double that of the first game. The game engine has been tweaked even more (not that the first one was shabby), and it runs as fast as ever. The control is still tight, which is key. Lastly, the soundtrack will be revamped with a bunch of popular artists who have yet to be announced.

Other than the "more stuff" (cars, tracks, modes), *Gran Turismo 2* is basically like the first *Gran Turismo* with minor enhancements. But is that such a bad thing? Sony's using a winning formula and giving the two million fans out there a new game to play. The wait ends this holiday season.

playstation **gran turismo 2**

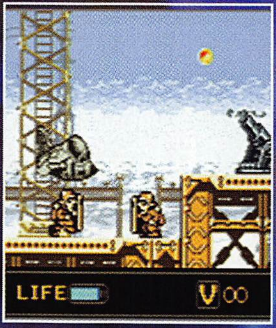
developer: polyphony digital studios publisher: scea

Metal Slug: 1st Mission

developer: SNK **publisher: SNK** [Neo Geo Color Pocket]

What better way to launch a new console than to have one of its best-loved action titles aboard? *Metal Slug: 1st Mission* takes all the gun-blazing action of the arcade *Metal Slug* series and places it in a pint-sized version for the Neo Geo Color Pocket. The frenetic pace and humorous animation is all there. Also, new weapons have been added to this game, such as a smart bomb and homing rockets. If you're wondering if SNK forgot the Metal Slug or Slug Fighter, don't worry, they're all here.

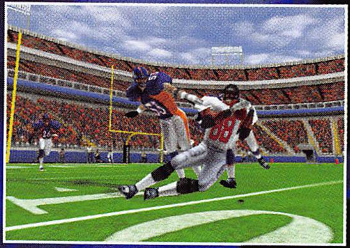
Differences between the NGPC version and the arcade are apparent since you must toggle between using your gun and grenades by pressing the option button. Also, levels feature multiple paths for the player to choose from, rather than the set path the arcade version sticks you on. These changes are done for a reason — to make the home version of *Metal Slug* on the NGPC more personalized and longer than the arcade version. Simply put, hard-core gamers HAVE to get a Neo Geo Color Pocket, and when you do, owners of a NGPC HAVE to get *Metal Slug: 1st Mission*.



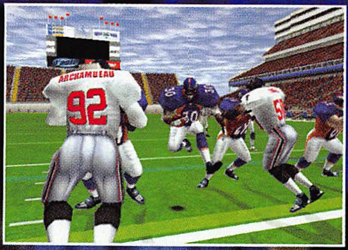




GameFan's Top Ten







Absolutely stunning — that is the only way to describe this game. Say what you will about the Dreamcast, but utter not an unfavorable syllable about this game. Visual Concepts, who has honed their skills over the past couple of years, has produced what is easily the coolest, most impressive sports game ever seen — no joke.

Every facet of this game is exemplary, from the outrageously good graphics and attention to detail, to the incredible control and gameplay mechanics. If there ever was a culmination of good ideas and even better execution, it's *NFL 2000*. Just to listen to the producers talk about the passing and catching mechanics... and then to see it in action is savory. If that ball is to be caught, then it must hit the player's hands. If it is to be successfully defended against, then the defensive back has to get his paws on it. Other titles may claim this, but only *NFL 2000* proves it with its top-notch instant replay feature. With the game running at a blistering 60fps, every tackle, catch, and kick is fully displayed. There will be no refuting these plays.

Play-calling, as you may already know, is done on your VMU, keeping all of your plays hidden from competitors. What you may not know is that the one-player game has a really clever way of displaying your playbook, overlapping it with the gameplay screen as your team lines up on the line of scrimmage. Each play's diagram is drawn onto the field, giving you the best possible view of the patterns that your players will run and what areas of the field they'll cover on D.

If you buy a DC come September 9th, this is an ABSOLUTE MUST!

NFL 2000 Dreamcast

developer: Visual Concepts **publisher: Sega**

NINTENDO 64

Perfect Dark

developer: rare   publisher: NINTENDO

In a year of few standout titles at the show, *Perfect Dark* is one of those few which breaks away from the pack and stands alone, especially on the N64. How do you spell success on that system? Other than Miyamoto, it's all about Rare — the creators of *GoldenEye*, the number one selling console game two years in a row (think about how ludicrous that statement is). Well, it's been years in development, but Rare is finally back with an unofficial sequel to *GoldenEye*, and it looks well worth the wait.

You play the role of Joanna Dark, a female special agent sent to rescue a scientist, but who stumbles across a greater conspiracy. Battling against both aliens and humans, Joanna encounters some intense alien armament. One example is the Farsight XR 20, which lets you see heat traces through walls, and snipe campers from the room next door.

Yet another thing to look forward to is personalizing your character. Take a quick snapshot from your GameBoy Camera, run it through the Transfer Pak, and you can map that picture onto your character's face in the game. Imagine running around with friends in multi-player mode with personal faces on the characters!

Best of all, the game's graphics are better than *GoldenEye*. Sporting a whole new engine, *Perfect Dark* looks awesome running in low-res. By the time the final explodes onto the scene this Christmas, it'll support the Expansion Pak and have the option for high-res.

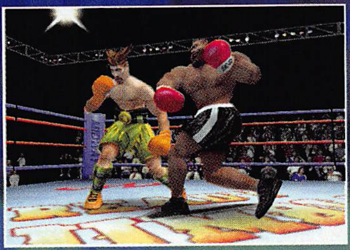




GAMEFAN'S TOP TEN







Argue all you want, but there have only been three good boxing games on console, ever: *Legends of the Ring*, *Ring King*, and *Super Punch-Out*; and they are all ancient by gaming standards. *Foes of Ali* sucked, *Contender* sucked, and as for *Knockout Kings*? It sucked, too. Finally, here is a boxing title that can boast eye-popping (you're gonna see this expression a lot now, with the arrival of the Dreamcast) graphics and great gameplay.

Easily one of the most talked about games of the show, Midway's *Ready 2 Rumble* takes pugilism to another level. One of the most refreshing aspects of *Rumble* is the fact that it didn't feel as though it needed to add some sort of licensing to the game in order to draw attention. There is no Tyson, Holyfield, Naseem, or Camacho thrown in. Instead there is a motley crew of goofy, stereotypical thugs, in the same style as those found in *Super Punch-Out*. Expect big afros, gorilla-sized opponents, and zany names.

Also, expect dead-on gameplay. Unlike other, more recent boxing games, *R2R* is actually responsive! There is no delay before you punch, the contestants move about the ring quite well, and the hitting and blocking mechanics are intuitive (although it can be a bit tough to defend, at times). This game has the moxie to get your blood pumping and your trash talking flowing. Try to get that out of *Contender* or *Knock-Out Kings*. It would be a mistake not to buy this game.

dreamcast

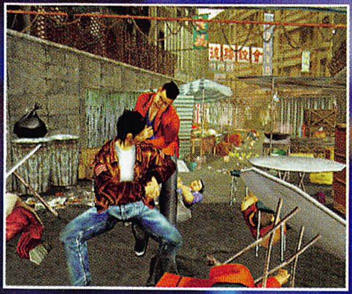
ready 2 rumble

developer: MIDWAY   publisher: MIDWAY

shen mue dreamcast

developer: sega publisher: sega

After witnessing *Shen Mue* firsthand, few can deny the visual prowess of Yu Suzuki's gaming masterpiece. Perhaps the most ambitious game ever conceived, *Shen Mue* easily showcases the DC's sheer graphical might. With a number of SEGA's renowned in-house teams such as Sonic Team (*Sonic Adventure*) and Team Ancient (*Legend Of Oasis*) contributing to this enormous project, it is a sure bet that *Shen Mue* will become an instant classic. The game consists of several styles of gameplay: a free battle mode, quick time event (*Dragon's Lair*-style combat) and regular RPG exploration. Although only the QTE demo was on display at the show, you can only imagine how unbelievable the free battle mode will be... think *VF3* on steroids. Also playable were facial demos of several of the *Shen Mue* characters that undoubtedly proved the DC's ability to replicate the PS2 facial models of an old man. The world in which *Shen Mue* takes place is so vast and insanely detailed that the photo-realistic graphics will surely overwhelm audiences and completely immerse players in Yu Suzuki's virtual world. Let's just hope that the quality found in *Shen Mue* will spill over to other potential DC hits.



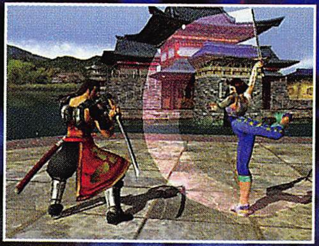


GAMEFAN'S TOP TEN

ELECTRONIC







Namco makes their first DC appearance in grand style with the arcade hit, *Soul Calibur*. The sequel to *Soul Blade* showcases the DC's raw poly-pushing power and demonstrates once and for all that the DC can perfectly port nearly any arcade game. EVERYTHING is intact in this unbelievable port, including ALL character animations (including some added animation) and insane lighting effects that had ECM and Hi-Fi begging Namco for a playable rev ASAP! *Soul Calibur* also sported some extremely impressive CG movies that completely toppled the cinemas found in the PSX version of *Soul Blade*. Those who have doubted the DC's might or who have opted to ride the PS2 bandwagon have another thing coming when *Soul Calibur* leaps onto the DC later this year. Hopefully, if SC sells well, the powers that be over at Namco will continue to support SEGA's super console far into the new millenium. Let's just hope that *Soul Calibur* is only the beginning of Namco's awesome DC lineup!

soul calibur dreamcast

developer: namco publisher: namco

NINTENDO 64

harvest MOON 64

developer: Natsume publisher: Namco

At first you might scoff at the idea of a farming RPG, but once you play, you're bound to get hooked. *Harvest Moon* was a cult classic for the SuperNES and GameBoy, and now Natsume brings the wacky yet lovable world of farming to the Nintendo 64. *Harvest Moon 64* promises to bring back all of the game elements of the original game, while expanding the world and bringing in new options and even more social interaction.

From the get-go, your judgement and strategy skills will be put to the test, as you try to build up your farm, plant and raise crops, take care of and deal livestock, and try to build a family in the process. New to the N64 version will be: a changeable viewpoint, new equipment and gifts, the ability to better customize your home, a much bigger world, part-time jobs, horse and dog racing, and much more. The biggest downfall of the previous versions of *Harvest Moon* were the lack of strength and variety in certain areas;so with all of these new features, those concerns look to be a thing of the past. Laugh if you want, but in a sea of sequels and "me-too" titles, *Harvest Moon 64* will stand out as a fresh and original alternative to the other gaming genres that have been long overdone. Sure, you might think you're good because you can get a high score or kill all of the aliens, but you're not TRULY hard-core until you can successfully run a farm and do it well.



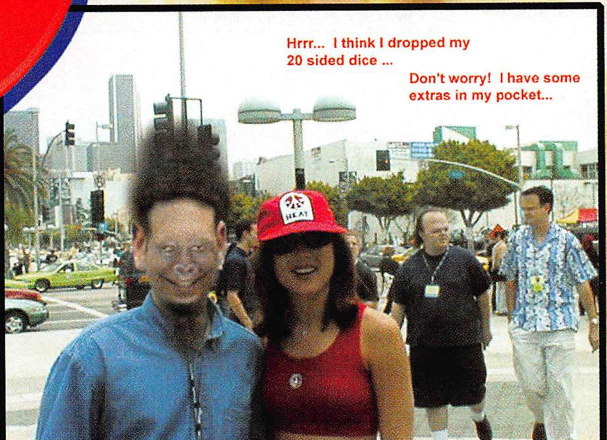


HONORABLE MENTION

the wrap-up

"Three days, many parties, and countless meetings later..."

the gf camera sees all...



Three days, many parties, and countless meetings later, Team *GameFan* emerged from the rubble of the Los Angeles Convention Center a much wearier, but happier band than before. For they had survived an all-out war between not three, but five consoles vying for supremacy. The day was won by Sega, thanks to a beefy bunch of sports titles, Yu Suzuki's finest hour (*Shen Mue*), and the almighty hedgehog.

But while Sega may have won this round, we haven't seen the last of Sony or Nintendo. For while crowds were gathered around the shining Dreamcast titles, hushed whispers spoke of newer and faster consoles in the works. Sony's PSY was at the show, surrounded by a trio of security guards, allowing gamers a brief glimpse of the future. And, not allowing Sony to have all the limelight, Nintendo announced plans for their new system, code-named "Dolphin," set to come out next year. It looks like Round 2 next year will be an all-out war between Sega's newly crowned champion, Sony's heir to the throne, and Nintendo's mysterious gladiator.

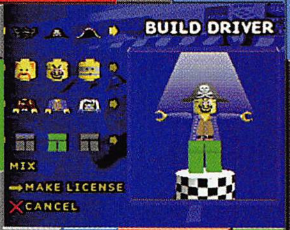
So while the workers begin rebuilding the LA Convention Center for next year's contest, Team *GameFan* must now return to the cave to rest, recuperate, and continue bringing you the best video game coverage on the planet! We had a blast at E3 this year and can only hope that these 40+ pages are enough to recount all that happened for those who weren't there to witness it.

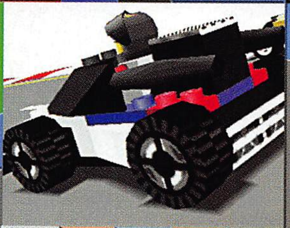
Who doesn't love LEGOs? The mere idea that LEGO is branching out into video games should come as welcome news to the hordes of gamers who used to spend countless hours building sprawling metropolises and giant spaceships. The possibilities are (seemingly) endless, which is exciting because there is a definite lack of originality on the console as of late.

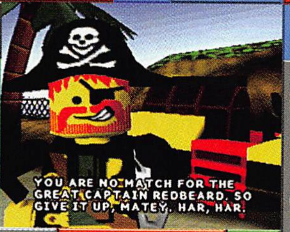
LEGO Media, the gaming arm of the Denmark-based company, held its first editors day, in the Southern California town of Carlsbad – the home of the newly opened LEGOLand amusement park. Although LEGO Media has been in existence since 1996, having released such titles as *LEGO Creator*, *LEGO Chess,* and *LEGO Loco*, 1999 marks their most aggressive product line-up thus far.

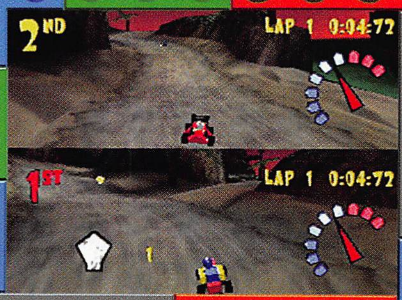
LEGO games.

LEGO RACERS









Build your own race car, out of LEGOs!? You did it when you were 10 (which typically became fodder for your younger brother: "Car go boom!"). It stimulated your creativity and was more fun than little blocks of plastic should be. I had almost forgotten how much fun LEGOs were... that is, until I saw this game. Now I get to do it all over again – although there is no destruction derby or messy clean-up this time around.

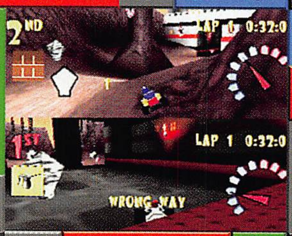
For the first time ever, you can race cars that you modify against a field of other wacky LEGO speedsters. I say modify, as opposed to build, because, while you do get to place the pieces on the car chassis, there isn't enough freedom to build your dream car (or even one that is more than a piece or two tall). This represents what looks to be the only real problem with the game. Having talked to the developers, it doesn't look as though this will be changed, either. It has something to do with the physics engine, which brings us to another of *LEGO Racers*' cooler aspects...

Each car will be affected by a real physics model. Loading up on the rear of the chassis will cause the car to wheelie; stacking bricks in the front will cause the car to move slower etc... When building your racer, you must consider such attributes as aerodynamics and weight distribution, or be prepared to finish last every time. Last is not where you want to be, either, since every time you beat a race, you gain access to new LEGO pieces!

The game will feature 12 tracks, themed after some of LEGO's more popular line-ups: pirates, castle, space, and adventurers. There is the Desert Adventure Dragway, Tribal Island Trail, and Magma Moon Marathon, to name a few. The cars you will be racing against are also from the themed line-ups. There is Redbeard, the pirate; Alpha Dragonis, the moon man; and Rob 'n Hood, the merry man of medieval times.

The engine is solid, resulting in some smooth racing and believable physics. The textures may turn some off, but they are modeled after LEGOs, so high detail is not part of the plan. The ability to customize your driver, as well as car, make for a great deal of depth, although the lack of flexibility and building your vehicle will frustrate older gamers. This title, however, is not aimed at older gamers, so I will zip my lip. **EN**







EL NINO: IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL RACE... | DEVELOPER - HIGH VOLTAGE | PUBLISHER - LEGO MEDIA | 1-2/1-4 PLAYERS | AVAILABLE FALL

LEGO ROCK RAIDERS





StarCraft with a LEGO twist... what could be cooler? Take control of a group of inter-stellar explorers as they scavenge for power crystals to fuel their spacecraft. After an unfortunate run-in with an asteroid, the crippled ship was swallowed by a black hole, only to be spit out into a far-flung corner of the galaxy. Repairs need to be made; energy needs to be harnessed; crystals need to be excavated. Setting down on a seemingly lifeless planet, our little LEGO raiders begin the task of collecting the crystals. Little do they know, these crystals are the life-blood of a race of rock monsters...







LEGO's first foray into the real-time strategy genre looks quite impressive. Though you shouldn't expect the all-out carnage associated with games like *Total Annihilation* and *StarCraft*; this is LEGO, after all, and they like to keep it a family affair. Not to say that *Rock Raiders* is without the necessary excitement which makes RTS titles so enjoyable.



The developer, Data Design Interactive, has done a super job, creating an enjoyable, engrossing story. No points are earned for gameplay, because it follows the same structure as all of the other RTS titles, from resource management and building to research hierarchies. The key to success will be to gradually expand and make sure to balance your scientific discoveries between defensive weapons and excavating machinery.

Each level is mission-based and has you undertaking such tasks as search and rescue, excavation, and perimeter defense. Your raiders will have a number of different drilling vehicles, air ships, and weapons to repel the rock monsters. While the game is skewed for the young, there is still a great deal of depth as well as strategy.

For the young and young at heart, *LEGO Rock Raiders* brings its special brand of fun to a tried-and-true gaming genre. Now let's see a *LEGO Extreme* game! Just kidding... **EN**







DEVELOPER - DATA DESIGN INTERACTIVE
PUBLISHER - LEGO MEDIA

1 PLAYER
AVAILABLE FALL

EL NINO: BE A LEGO-MANIAC, RTS-STYLE!



Computers: Good For Anything?!

In my mind, computers are typically good for one of two things: word processing, **or** *Quake 2* (no, the Internet is **not** a good thing). The former is self-explanatory, as anybody that has ever typed an essay, college thesis or the countless hacks pounding out the "Great American Novel" (I'm talkin' to you, King) can attest. However, when it comes to the latter, anybody that's logged even ten minutes in a multi-player, *Quake 2* frag-fest will tell you this is what PCs are **all** about. And while I'd never dream of trying to craft the latest in a long-line of frenzied, hyperbole strewn rants on a console system, Activision has made a strong argument for spending some *Q2* time on the N64.

Fitting Ten Gallons of Blood Into a Five Gallon Container

When word got out that Activision intended to port *Q2* over to PS <snicker> and N64 <guffaw> most were a bit skeptical about how smooth the conversion would be <chortle>. How in the world would anybody be able to squeeze the entire PC experience into the cursed confines of an N64 cart? And based on early revs of the games, while the PS version was progressing amazingly well, the N64 iteration was limping along like a forced 24-hour caffeine and nicotine-deprived Reubus — in other words, a twisted, shambling wreck begging to be put out of its misery. While the one-player mode ran at a semi-respectable frame rate, the multi-player modes were a wretched mess and everyone at GF HQ assumed it was a lost cause. Ah, but how does that saying about assumptions go?





N64 Revelation!

While you'd be crazy to ever think that anyone could possibly flawlessly recreate *Quake 2* on the N64, you'd only be therapy-level crazy and not committal-level insane as you might expect. While it's true that the levels had to be seriously scaled down, the animation trimmed back, and the overall game resolution reduced, apparently Raster has still managed to work a minor miracle. Taking into account the N64's hardware limitations (storage space, lack of RAM), Raster probably couldn't have done a better job. For instance, whereas the PC version of Q2 was predominantly orange and brown-hued, the N64 runs with a gloriously varied color-palette; 24-bit, no less. Miracle of miracles, however, even the frame rate manages to stay amazingly high (for an N64 FPS) in one-player mode and is actually totally playable in 4-player mode; though it won't make anybody dump their PCs.





Enter The Quake... Arena

While I'm willing to acknowledge that the one-player aspect of this particular version of *Quake 2* is the best yet (which doesn't say a whole lot), anybody that has ever played a few rounds with a gaggle of gamers over a LAN or Internet connection knows this is what the real excitement is about and the main reason why there is no one-player 'quest' mode in the forthcoming *Quake 3* Arena. In two-player mode, the

ECM: It's frag-adelic, baby!	Developer - Raster Publisher - Activision	1-4 Players Available Now	Viewpoint Score :87

frame rate is virtually identical to the one-player outing with no perceptible drop in frame rates. Once you get into 4-player matches, however, the game starts to chug a bit, although the only weapon you'll have trouble dealing with is the ultra-deadly railgun which requires dead-on timing and accuracy. Let's just say there will be no dropping from above, taking two death-defying hops over a lava pit while spinning 180 degrees to rail the nearest cretin, with all the grace of an Olympic gymnast — the rocket launcher is your best friend in 4-player mode; learn it, live by it.





Eek! Mouse!

Even if the graphics made it over with a fairly high screen resolution, blazing color, solid frame rate and a very respectable four-player mode, none of that would have meant anything if Raster couldn't accurately mimic the beauty of the PC's mouse/keyboard control scheme. Borrowing a page from Iguana's book, they've incorporated standard *Turok*-control: the control

QUAKE II

stick manipulates your 'head' while the 'c' buttons control walking and strafing. Anybody that's ace in *Turok* should have little-to-no trouble making the transition to *Quake 2* as the 'feel' is virtually identical. For the newbies out there that have never played *Quake* **or** *Turok* it'll take some getting used to, and unless you're of the hopelessly S.A.G. (Fury, for instance) you'll be mowin' miscreants down with each squeeze of your painfully itchy trigger finger.





Ka-Blam!

What we have here, soldiers, is a meaty, if slightly slower version of the PC mega-hit. While I would have loved to have seen a Lithium mod (super powers and a grappling hook) or some intense rocket arena action, what's here is the goods. The fact that you'll actually want to play through the one-player mode is something of a miracle in and of itself. Now, about that console word processor... one with lots of sprites and parallax, <drool>.

While ECM typically abuses the editorial staff on a daily basis in Quake 2, *they get their revenge by placing the Twinkies on the top of the fridge and hiding the ladder.*

Hail To The King, Baby!

GT's bubblegum-chewin' asskicker is back... and he's still out of gum. 'Cept this time around, instead of being just a port of the mega-popular PC game and its countless progeny (like *Duke Nukem 64*), *Duke Nukem Zero Hour* is an original title, designed exclusively for the N64. Even better, the group developing it, Eurocom, was responsible for that incredible port of *Mortal Kombat 4* on N64.







Ready For Action...

In *Duke Nukem: Time to Kill* for the PlayStation, Duke answers a pay phone and responds to the moaning female voice with, "Lara... is that you?" Well, *TTK* Duke, Lara, and now *ZH* Duke all share one thing in common: they're stars in their own 3rd person adventures. That's right, while Duke originally made a name for himself gibbin' aliens in 1st person shooters on the PC, the latest console games (*TTK* and *ZH*) have portrayed Duke in a different light... a 3rd person light. It's time to kick some polygonal ass for a change.





DUKE ZER:Ø

Damn, I'm Lookin' Good

The game engine looks beefy so far. The frame-rate hacks and coughs at high resolution, but drop it down to medium or normal res and the frame-rate remains slick and steady. This is all with the Expansion Pak, of course; without it, you're trapped in the low-res zone (ugh, talk about a Time to Kill...).

Dukeinator 2: Judgment Day

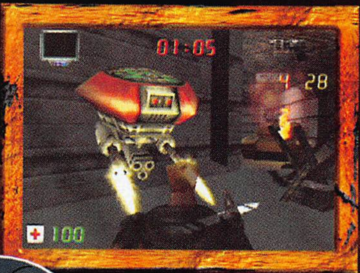
Check out this original story line: Aliens have traveled back in time to prevent Duke from being born. If their evil plan goes unchecked, gamers would be subjected to a countless slew of brain-dead, personality-less 1st person shooters banking on the FPS trend (my god... it's happening already!). To prevent the extinction of our beefcake hero, you take Duke and travel back in time to stop them from altering the future... which is the present. You won't need a flux capacitor, either, to see different times such as post-apocalyptic New York, the Wild West, and Victorian England.





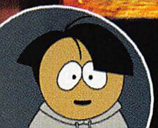
I'm Gonna Rip Your Head Off...

One area which needs work right now is the jumping. The control is definitely too touchy (especially when timing a leap), and the platforming section of the training area was far more aggravating than it should've been. Shades of the original *Turok*... grrr. I hope this play mechanic gets overhauled big-time.









Eggo: Come get some... more.

Developer - Eurocom
Publisher - GT Interactive

1-4 Players
Available 3rd Quarter

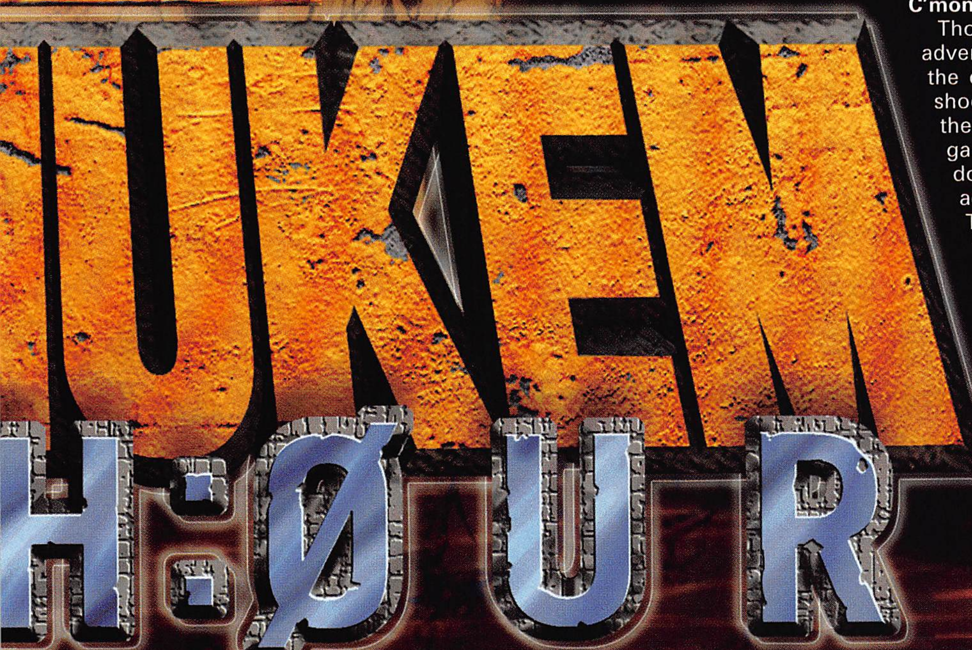





Shake It, Baby. Shake It...

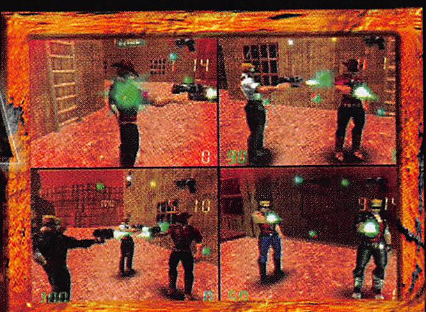
What would a *Duke Nukem* game be without babes? Not *Duke Nukem*, that's for sure. No need to fear, the babes are here in force, and they're just waiting to be saved by a studly hunk of manhood like yourself. "Save me! Save me!" Plus, to reward you, every female expresses her gratitude verbally. N64 owners know that speech is a precious commodity on a cartridge, but still, there's plenty of it in *DN:ZH*. Babes aren't the only ones talkin' either. Duke has classically been a wise-crackin,' pistol-packin' ass-kicker... and he continues to talk trash in *Zero Hour*.

'Course, you can't expect much profanity to filter through the censors at Nintendo (this is a family fun machine, after all), but there is plenty of adult content to warrant that Mature rating. Let's just say there's a lot of visual humor to make up for having to say "crap" instead of... "*Deadly Arts*." Billboards and strip joints litter the streets of New York, and there's plenty of racy content (e.g., a sign advertising "Louinski's all-natural Clam Juice Mmmm..."). I can't wait to see what gets approved by Nintendo in the final version. Especially after seeing what Acclaim was able to get away with in *South Park*, it looks like the Big N might be loosening the reins a little bit and letting developers have some freedom.



C'mon, Get The Lead Out!

Though it's kinda strange for a 3rd person adventure to be like this, *Zero Hour* plays like the old *Duke Nukem* — that is, a 1st person shooter... but in 3D. Duke, his enemies, and the environment are all polygonal, but the gameplay is far from switching-flipping and door-finding (which is what I expect from an action/adventure game like *Tomb Raider*). Thankfully, the focus of *Zero Hour* remains the termination of evil aliens... one body at a time. There's plenty of John Woo-style two-pistol cappin' perforation, combined with grenade launching, shotgun blastin,' and even rifle snipin.' OK, so it's not really Duke-like to pick off green men from a distance, but when was a sniper rifle not fun?





Bitchin'

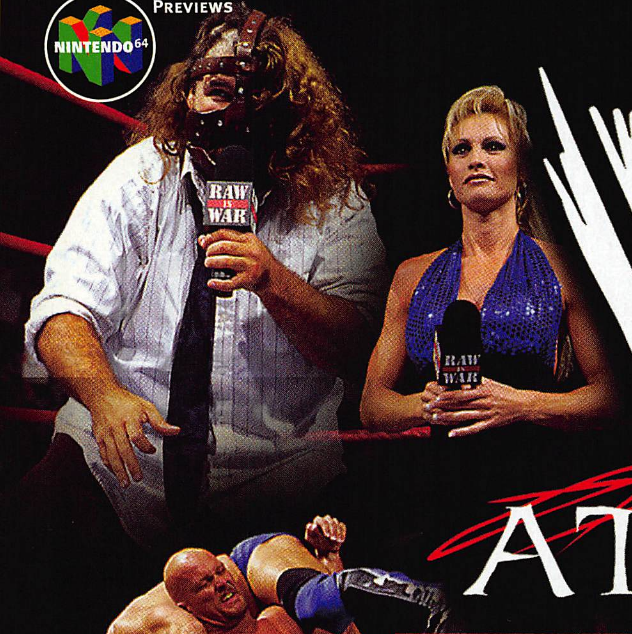
What's the only thing better than Duke Nukem? Four times the Duke, that's what. We're talkin' multi-player gibbin' till the sun rises. At first, I wasn't looking forward to *Zero Hour's* multi-player, because I always considered *Duke Nukem* a single-player game, but after seeing the engine blazing smoothly with four players simultaneously, my thoughts are changing. Too bad you're all Dukes though, no Pig Cop or alternate characters.




Come Get Some... Later

The best news I can give you is that this game isn't coming out right away. Huh? Apparently, Eurocom is maintaining high standards with this game (continually delaying it till they get it right, rather than rushing it out the door), so don't be surprised if they fix all of the game's flaws (jumping, hi-res frame-rate) by the time it ships. Last we heard, the release date was pushed back to August. We'll keep you posted as we get closer and closer to *Zero Hour*. **E**

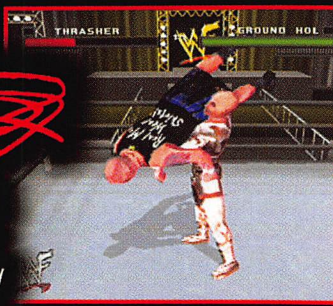
WWF Attitude



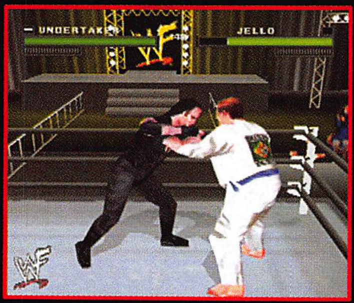


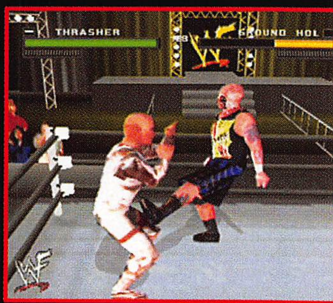












Picture this: It is the pay-per-view event of the year. You have chosen the type of matches to be displayed, as well as the wrestlers that will strut their stuff. The entire look of the event has been meticulously tweaked by you, from the placing of the flashing lights, to the design of the banners, and the color scheme of the ring. This is your night, your creation.

This is just one of the options that will be made available to you in *WWF Attitude*, the newest installment in Acclaim's ongoing franchise. Developed by Iguana, this game is more than just 'roid raging alpha males in spandex. This is a game of 'roid raging alpha males in wondrous 64-bit. Can I hear an amen?

Still too early to be judging gameplay, it is already known that the game will contain all of the WWF's most popular wrestlers and managers. There's the Undertaker and Pallbearer, Mankind, Ken Shamrock, and of course, Stone Cold Steve Austin. Each wrestler looks just like his or her (that's right, some of wrestling's leading ladies are in the game, too!) real-life performer and comes complete with signature moves and ring entrances.

Mimicking the real spectacle, *WWF Attitude* will be about excess and pageantry. There won't be any earth-shattering concepts, original design features or revolutionary, genre-bus ing additions; *WWF Attitude* will b about giving the fan the most bang fo their buck, while making look a sparkling as possible. To do this, the are sticking to the same formula tha made past titles successful, but hav added a great deal more features.

There is the detailed create-a-wrestle feature, which will allow you to custon design your very own musclehead Make him hairy or fat or bald; heck make him hairy fat *and* bald Customize his moves, theme musi and costume; decide whether he is bad guy or a good guy.

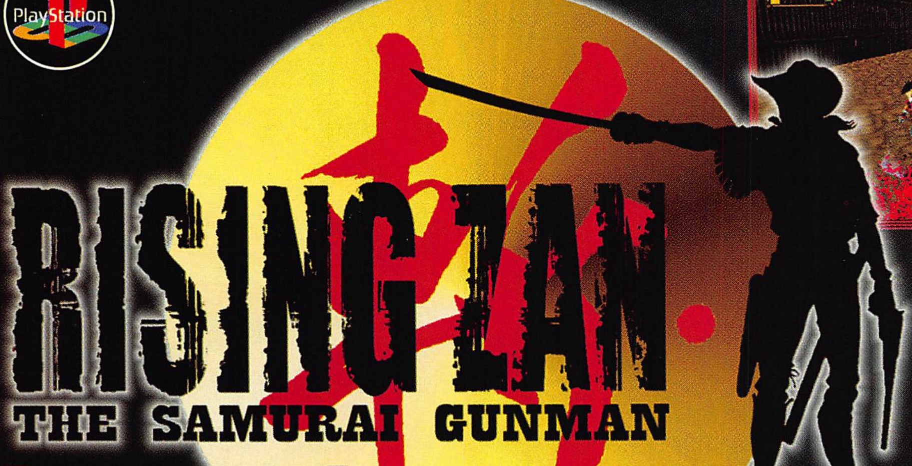
Many gameplay modes and the afore mentioned custom pay-per-view optio go a long way in adding depth, as wel Take part in a Tag Team match, Cag Brawl, Royal Rumble (my favorite) o any one of another half dozen modes There are over 2 dozen characters, plen ty of zany moves and some entertainin commentary to keep the action exciting

The graphics are going to be a lo better than in the PlayStation versio but that will be the only area that dif fers (unless you consider the monste intro, in the PlayStation version some thing worth noting).

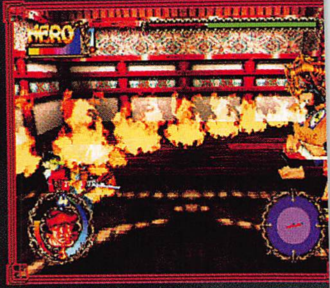
If the wrestling gods are willing, *WW Attitude* will be the behemoth of a wrestling titles. Now if you will excus me, I have to take Eggo to the mat. **El**



EL NINO: Stone Cold Steve Austin is loud and proud! | **Developer - Iguana** / **Publisher - Acclaim** | **1-4 Players** / **Available Summer**







RISING ZAN
THE SAMURAI GUNMAN





Choose One:
When you first heard there was a game starring a cowboy samurai, you thought:

A) Was this the result of a developer looking at two magazines lying on top of each other (like *Black Belt* and *Guns 'N Ammo*)? Or did someone actually brainstorm this?
B) Is this... is this really necessary?
C) It's a really bad April Fool's joke, right? Like the Avatar and *Mortal Instinct*?
D) This niche game looks as fun as tossing quarters at the intersection of the wall and the floor.
E) At least it's not a dating sim or a monster breeding game...

See, I know exactly how you feel. Before I played it, I was like you — sitting in that seat, holding the magazine, thinking "No chance in Hell am I goi anywhere near this game." A main hero wh wields a gun **and** a katana in the Wild, Wi West? It sounds ludicrous... and that's exact what this game is. Zany, over-the-top, and mo importantly, not serious — not in the least.

The story mixes elements from the TV sho *Kung Fu* and the movie *Bloodsport*, while the se ting is straight out of a spaghetti Wester There's the traditional Wild West towns, train and sheriffs... along with the tradition Western robots, ninja assassins, and pagoda with broadside cannons. Johnny is a blue-eye cowboy who's defeated by a ninja at an early ag Wanting to be a well-rounded hero, Johnny ask his father's friend Suzuki to teach him the ways ZIPANG (martial arts). Many years later, Johnn returns to his hometown with a different nam (Zan) and newfound skills with the sword, but h has not forgotten how to use his gun. Is the wor ready for the super, ultra-sexy hero, Zan?

Lemme get this out of the way, because it's gonn be everyone else's gripe about this game — th graphics. In particular, the engine isn't very impre sive. There's all that good stuff you'd expect in a 3 adventure: the occasional bad camera, polygo breakup, pop-up, etc. But, *Tenchu* and *Duke Nuker TtK* had all that, and those problems could be ove looked if you liked the game. Speakin' of *Du Nukem*, *Rising Zan* has a lot of elements similar t GT's ass-kicker: a mature rating, the sexy main hero gunfighting, babes (geisha... woohoo!), and puzzle

What's important is that *RZ* plays pretty well; it's hodgepodge mix of mini games with platform ele ments, puzzle-solving, *Tenchu*-style swor fighting, rapid-fire button-mashing, and gratuitous mine-cart scene. Now, is it me does every game that comes out nowaday have a mandatory mine-cart mini-gam (case in point: *Croc 2*)? Is this the new 'len flare' that developers feel the need to bea us over the head with till we're a twitchin heap on the floor? But I digress...

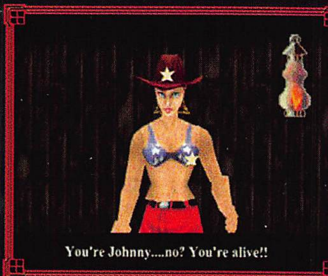
Let's talk about some fun stuff... like bloo and guts! A very important element of 3 adventures is the combat, and *Rising Za* gives you plenty of options. First off, yo have free reign over the 3D environs, plus th ability to lock-on to a single enemy and rotat around it like *Zelda 64*. Unfortunately, it's no done as well as *Zelda*; but also unfortunatel not every game developer is a Miyamoto











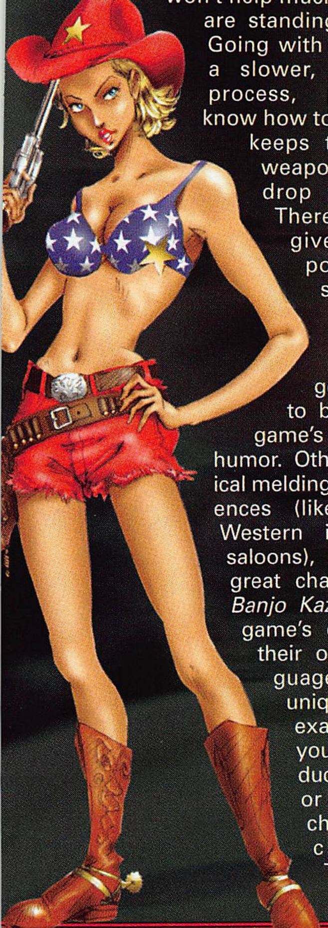


EGGO: Sushi Western... or sign of the Apocalypse? | Developer - UEP Systems | Publisher - Agetec | 1 Player | Available Sept. | Viewpoint Score :84

ere's standard-issue blocking and slice-and-dice hting, like *Tenchu*, plus you have a variety of pace clearing' special moves, like in *Fighting Force* rr...> or *Final Fight*. When ninjas feel the cold steel your sword, arteries open and blood flows like... nm... the glut of mine cart mini-games. This game s that cutting-edge gore and spurting piles of plas- a that *Tenchu* had... plus guns!

Rising Zan's gimmick is the choice of carving baddies with the sword or gunning them own like pigs with a Colt .45-ish pistol. The katana is far more lethal, but won't help much when enemies are standing out of reach. Going with the handgun is a slower, but far safer process, provided you know how to strafe. *RZ* also keeps track of which weapon you used to drop the bad guys. There's also a score given for "sexy points" (a.k.a. style points) at the end of every level.







Before I forget, attention has to be called to this game's wacky sense of humor. Other than the comical melding of Eastern influences (like sushi), with Western influences (like saloons), *Rising Zan* has great characters. As in *Banjo Kazooie*, all of the game's characters have their own distinct language, made up of unique sounds. An example of what you'll hear is: "Duk duck, duck duckoo" or "Chan chan chan, go changkoo." There's also a funny "Big Sword" power-up, where, for a limited time, your blade grows ridiculously large, allowing you to dice up enemies like a cuisinart, accompanied by wacky music straight out of a Japanese TV show. If you can't appreciate this game's nuttiness, then you're probably lost amid the ranks of jaded gamers out there.

Unfortunately, *Rising Zan* has one major drawback: length. There are only 10 levels, and each is not that long, so ninja gamers can finish this game in one sitting if they choose to. While there is limited replay value in unlocking a hidden character, the gameplay itself isn't as random as a *Tenchu* or *Metal Gear Solid*. So while *Rising Zan* may not fall into the must-buy category, it's definitely a must-rent title. Don't let this one pass you by, especially because of the Samurai Gunman theme.

Eggo can't stand sushi and he hates Westerns, but he likes this game... go figure.



Five Questions with Mark Johnson, Producer

1) What has the response been like in Japan to the world's first "Sushi-Western" game?

So far, the game has been out for about two weeks in Japan and it has been doing pretty well. I think everyone who has played it has really enjoyed it, not only for the sushi-western style plot, but also for the wicked gameplay. I think everyone, whether Japanese, American, European, etc. can enjoy being a super ultra sexy cool hero. It has universal appeal.

On top of all that stuff, you got a game that is different than a lot of other ones out there. It is nice to be able to just plug in a game and start slashing/shooting away. And if you gotta save a couple captives stuck on poles in their boxers along they way, then so be it!

2) Are there any plans for a Dreamcast or Nintendo 64 port of *Rising Zan*? What about a sequel?

Right now I am not at liberty to discuss future plans for the *Zan* franchise. However, I did have a dream last night that there was a full line of both inflatable and kung-fu grip style action figures. Then came the *Zan* pop rocks and happy meals; they were good. But seriously folks, at this time we are concentrating on implementing some brand spankin' new features for the US release. Then we'll see what happens!

3) The music is full of electric guitar riffs and screeching lyrics. Is heavy metal still popular in Japan?

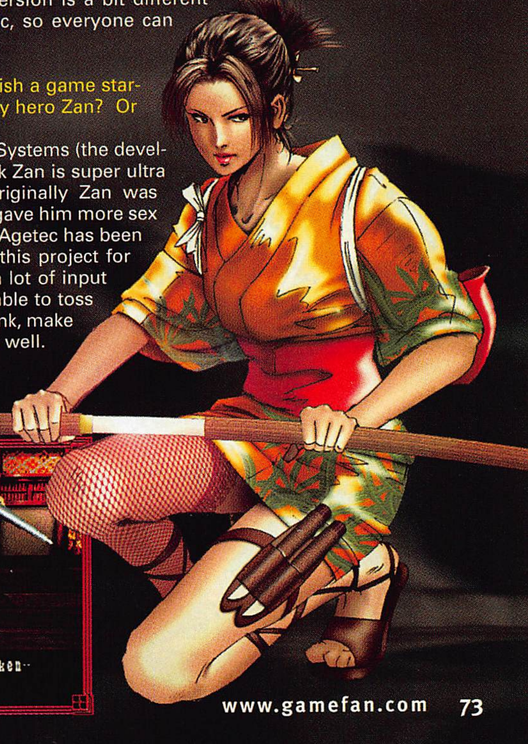
Still popular? Heavy metal music will never die! Isn't metal still popular here? Actually, the theme song for *Zan* in the States was recorded here in northern Cal using some real rockers! The music fits extremely well with the gameplay and I think it adds a great deal to the whole head-banging ambience *Zan* offers. In answer to your question though, metal still has a hard-core following in Japan and while the theme song in the Japanese version is a bit different style-wise, we have made it the ending music, so everyone can give it a listen. Judas Priest rules!!!

4) Was it a hard sell convincing Agetec to publish a game starring a unique character like the super ultra sexy hero Zan? Or were they excited right away?

Of course we were excited right away! UEP Systems (the developer) is awesome to work with, and if you think Zan is super ultra sexy, you should see the programmers! Originally Zan was labeled the 'far-out introverted slob' but we he gave him more sex appeal right away and look where he is today. Agetec has been fortunate in that we have been involved with this project for well over a year and have been able to have a lot of input into what you will see in the game. We were able to toss around ideas and work closely with UEP to, I think, make a great game that is fun to play and comical as well.

5) David Carradine — Cool or Uncool?

Cool! Ultra sexy — not even.







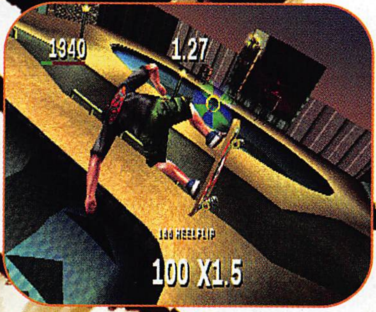


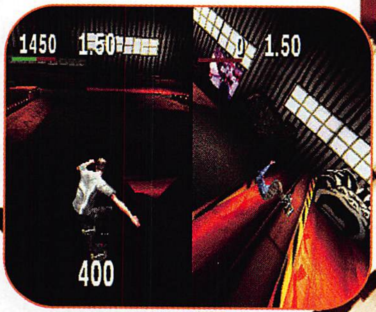
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER











OK, so the game has only two levels thus far, no secret skaters, no special moves and no modes of play other than one-player. What it does have, though, is a highly augmented, monster engine, first used in the very underrated *Apocalypse*. Based on just this sliver of a game, I can tell you *Tony Hawk Pro Skater* will be one of the best PlayStation games of the year!

Not since I was in junior high, in the mid-'80s (yes, mid), have I stepped onto a skateboard. That was the heyday of Tony and the rest of the Bones Brigade. Independent trucks and Devil Lock hair-dos abounded... as did the Bactine treatments and broken bones. I wasn't a good skater though, so my Simms' days were numbered, destined to spend the majority of its life collecting dust in my closet, before it made me a couple of bucks at a yard sale. Those were enjoyable days, however few, and the one thing that sticks out most in my mind was the desire to pull off the gravity-defying moves of my favorite skaters...

Now, I can. The first truly remarkable and very realistic skateboard game has hit the console, and all gamers should take note. *Tony Hawk Pro Skater* is right on track to be the sleeper hit of the '99 Christmas season. As I mentioned earlier, only two levels are currently playable, and many of the moves still aren't in, but that doesn't keep this preview copy from harnessing some of the best gameplay to date. The souped-up engine impresses greatly, boasting no poly break-up, great collision detection, sweet mo-cap, and gorgeous graphics — all at 30fps! Even more impressive is that two-player mode maintains the frame-rate as well as the ease of gameplay (hey, a split-screen view I can use)!

The trick mechanics resemble those of *CoolBoarders 2*. Release the X button when you want to grab air and then enter whatever maneuver you like, using the d-pad and square, circle, or triangle. You can string together as many tricks as a vertical air will allow, and creativity will be rewarded with mucho style points. Unlike some other sk8ter titles, *Tony Hawk* allows you to utilize every object in the environment. If it has an edge, you can rail slide; if it has a curve, you can shoot off it; if it has vertical surface, you can defy it with an ollie. Each level will be a true playground for gamers to explore and exploit.

When done, *Tony Hawk Pro Skater* will include more than 10 levels, secret boards, and pro skaters such as Bob Burnquist and Tony and Chad Muska. As an added bonus, nowhere is the word "extreme" used... thank the Lord for the little things. **EN**

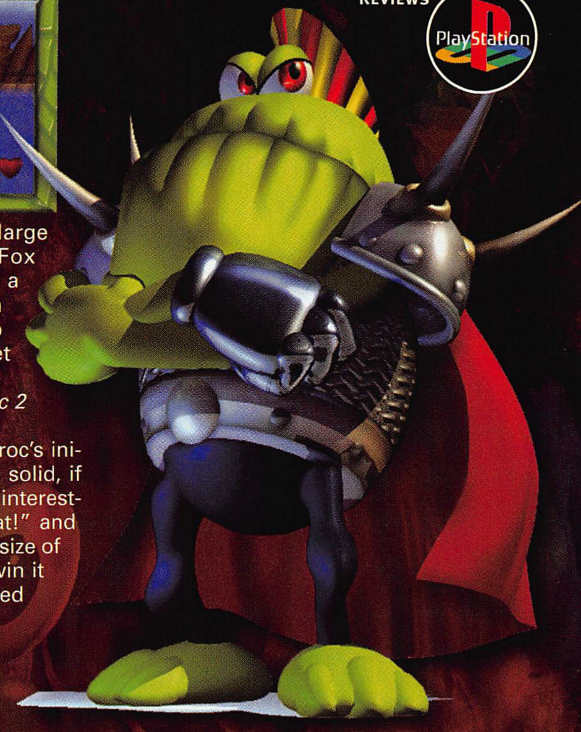
EL NINO: THE SEARCH FOR ANIMAL CHIN CONTINUES... | DEVELOPER - NEVERSOFT PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION | 1-2 PLAYERS AVAILABLE 3RD QTR.







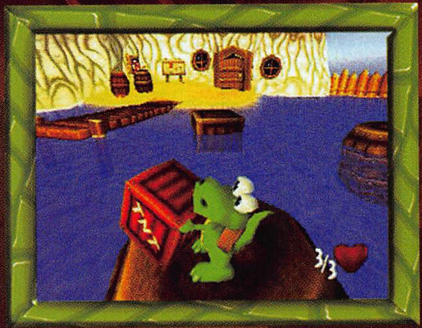




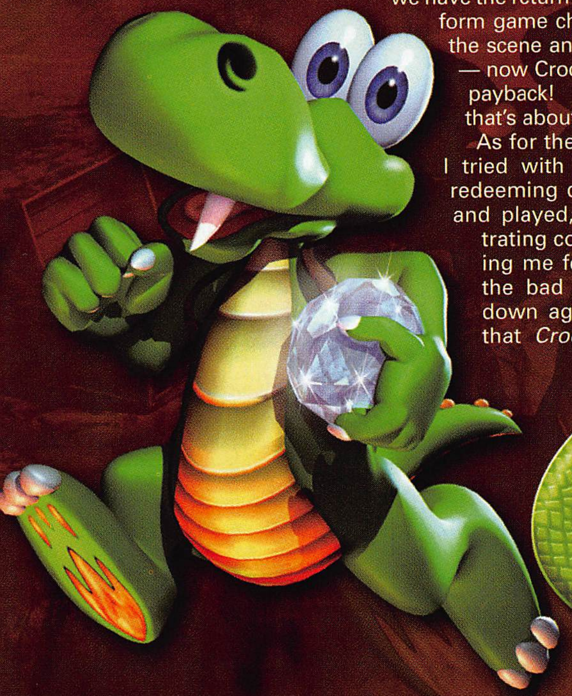
"OK, Croc, you're the up-and-coming video game superstar, coming off a successful initial run but are now beset by a poor engine and some questionable camera work, which despite your best efforts, breeds only frustration and anger. ECM, you're the holier-than-thou, über-cranky critic expounding from your rather large soapbox on how a company as promising as Fox Interactive (and a developer like Argonaut) could take a character as lovable as good ol' Croc and place him in such a sad, depressing situation with no means to work his magic. Got it guys? Good. OK people, quiet on the set — lights, camera, action!"
—Wes Craven, on the set of the new 'horror' movie *Croc 2*

Y' know, when it comes right down to it, I enjoyed Croc's initial outing on PlayStation and <sniff>, Saturn. It was a solid, if limited, platforming adventure and provided for some interesting if not overly sickeningly sweet gameplay ("Ker-splat!" and the ultra-lovable gobbos, et al). Even though the overall size of the environs and some slightly off-kilter control didn't win it any awards, many a gamer persevered and was rewarded with a solid action romp against the nefarious Baron Dante — however, it seems that he himself may have meddled in the creation of *Croc 2*...

But every game has its positive aspects, right? First, we have the return of the cutest and sweetest platform game character since Pikachu came on the scene and out-cuted all that came before — now Croc and his gobbo pals are out for some payback! Uh, anyway, there's also, um, well that's about it...<gurgle>.



As for the negatives, well, let me just say that I tried with every ounce of my being to find redeeming qualities in *C2*. I played and played and played, despite the dizzying camera, frustrating controls, and Croc's penchant for making me feel way too happy... until of course the bad control brought me crashing back down again. Now I can appreciate the fact that *Croc* is more than likely geared at a



Croc 2

younger crowd — but so what?! With control this slow and unresponsive, little Jimmy is gonna be crying to Momma within minutes. I can't count the number of times I was running towards a looming platform, hit the jump button and landed in a fiery pit of lava, with poor Croc yelping in pain (actually, it kinda sounded like he enjoyed it, hmmm...).

The other half of this painful equation is the camera system. The single most important thing that has to be done correctly is the camera in any 3D game, and especially in 3D platformers. Whereas it wasn't as big an issue with the first *Croc* (with its relatively small and narrow level structure), it becomes a huge headache in the second chapter. More often than not, as you're turning around or running along, the camera will either spin too quickly, or not quickly enough. Sometimes it even went into seizures spinning over and over in disorienting circles (not unlike my world after a really long Friday night). My guess is that Argonaut didn't take as much time tweaking the camera to operate in the larger areas of this installment — a big 'no-no' in my book.



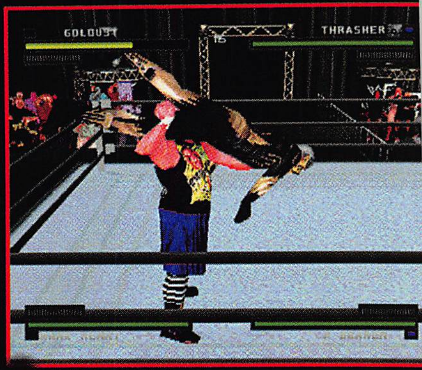
So while *C2* features some decent graphics and good ideas, the game simply fails to come together due to some unresponsive control and a very loopy cameraman. My hope is that whatever stage the DC rev is in, they take great care with the camera and the control and not replicate what's been wrought here. Otherwise, Mr. Craven may be in for a little sequel action: *Croc DC - Lay it to Rest*.

In his spare time, ECM assists in the production of The Discovery Channel's *The Crocodile Hunter. He plays the bait.*

Viewpoint Score	Developer / Publisher	Players / Availability	Comment
:65	Developer - Argonaut Publisher - Fox Interactive	1 Player Available Now	ECM: It's gotta be the shoes... crocodile shoes.







Raw is war, baby! Whether it's in your house, full of attitude, or over the edge; no matter how you slice it, expect a summer slam of Wrestlemania. Woo! I'm all sweaty, now...

If there was ever a license to print money, WWF is that phenomenon (much to the chagrin of the educated establishment). Build a better wrestling game and the Camaros will beat a path to your door. Acclaim is savvy to this hotbed of mullets and cheap beer and have been successfully milking it for every minimum wage dollar. Good for them, good for us, good for the consumer.

I have always held that the wrestling genre was ahead of the technology. No doubt about it, this is a sport (pageant?) that was tailor-made for consoles. Pro wrestling is nothing more than a real-life video game, and I would love to see it done right. Quite frankly it really hasn't been fully realized to date; almost, but not quite.

Here's *WWF Attitude*, the newest installment in the decline of western civilization, and its grasp, too, may exceed its reach. However, it is also clear that this is Acclaim's most impressive venture into the world of steroid-pumped (no really, those are just vitamin supplements...) body-slammin' yet.

For WWF fans, this is the piece de resistance (that's French for really, *really* good, fellas). All of the fan faves and evil-doers, a library of moves as big as Undertaker's long-johns, and more modes than Sybil has personalities. That's not all, kids; you'll also be able to custom design your own wrestlers (look at my fat bastard) and create your own pay-per-view events! An impressive amount of depth, wrestling-heads.

WWF ATTITUDE

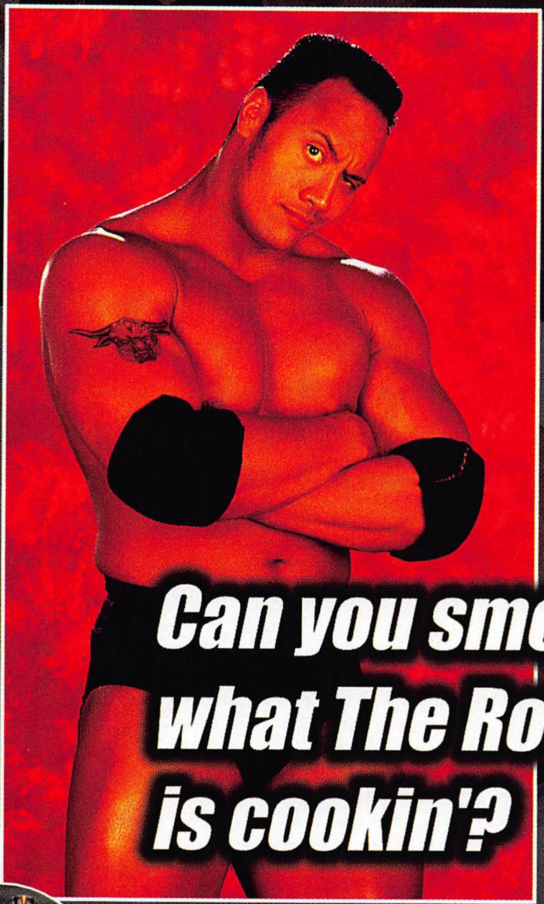




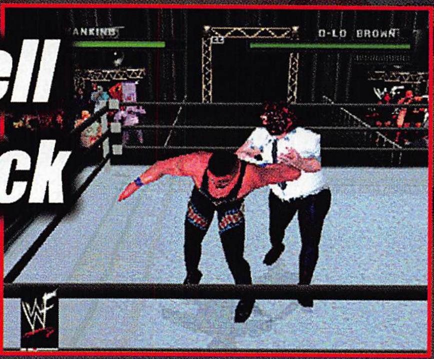
The graphics and gameplay seem to be pretty good at this point, but many of the extra bits, like sound and entrances, have yet to be added. There is nothing in this previewable version that would lead me to believe that the game will be sub-par, but I worry about the scope of the project. *WWF Attitude* is definitely making an aggressive attempt to be the biggest, baddest, most in-depth wrestling experience to date, and that is a borderline Herculean task. It is Iguana, though, and they have the magic touch.

One thing is certain: *WWF Attitude* will be hot! Even if it falls short of its intended goal, it will leave fans of the over-the-top soap opera of alpha male moshing very happy. **EN**





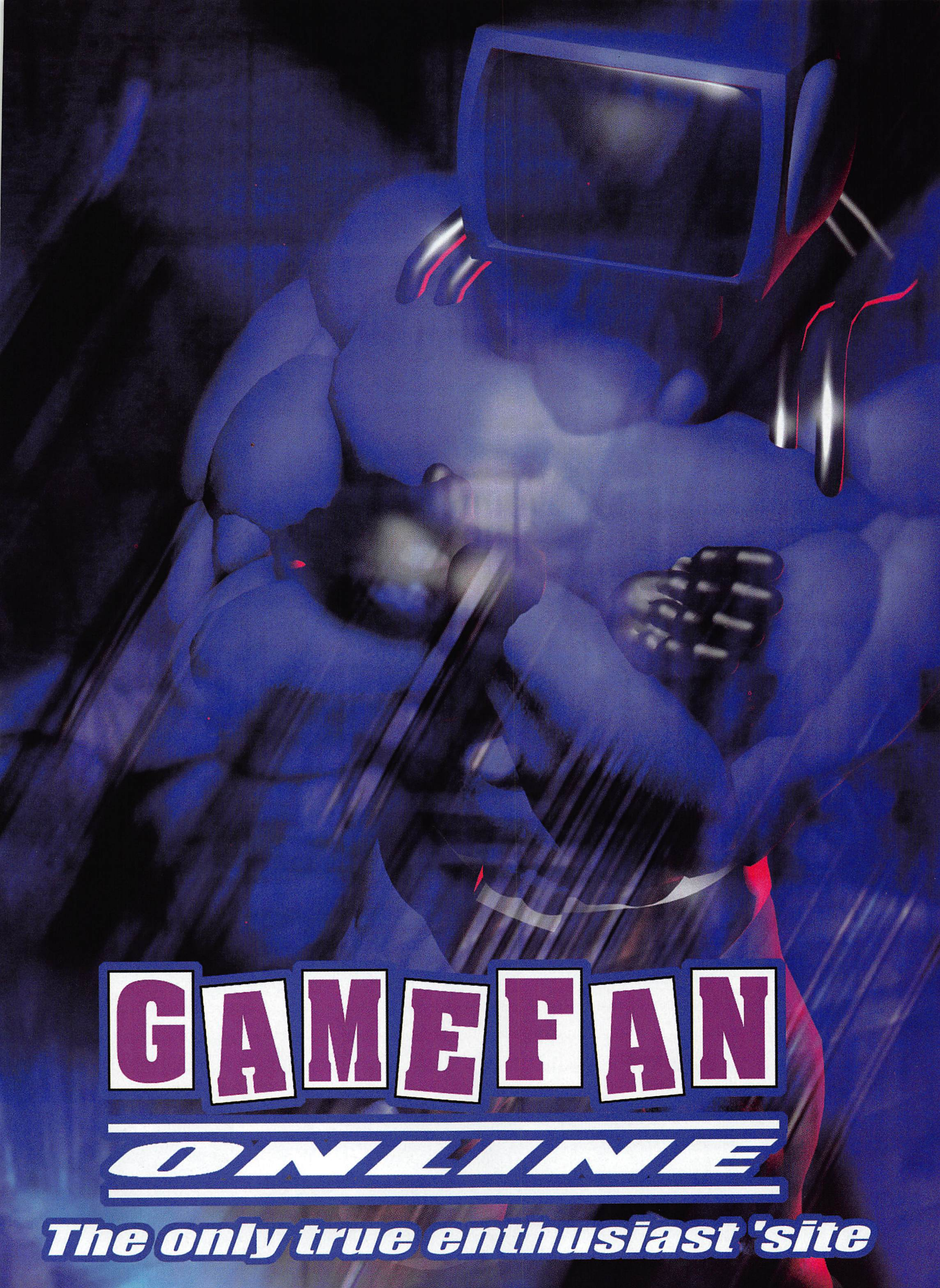
Can you smell what The Rock is cookin'?

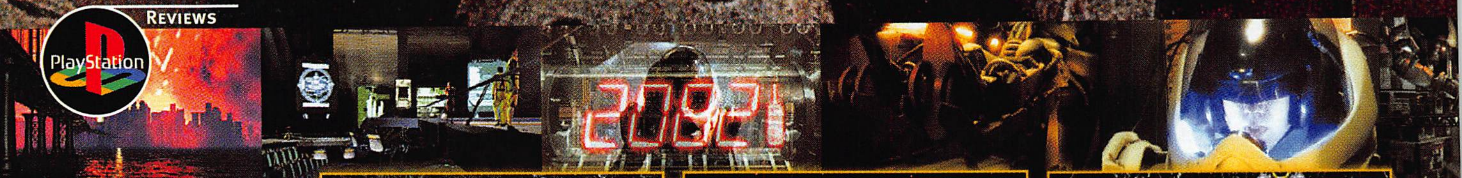






EL NINO: HEY, WHERE'S BRET HART? OOPS... | DEVELOPER - IGUANA | PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM | 1-2 PLAYERS | AVAILABLE SUMMER


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OM BO

Special Force EX Generation
Networks in ruined intellectual chaos of Alphacore const

Since the unfortunate demise of the *Panzer Dragoon* franchise due to gamer apathy (in Japan), the death of the Saturn, and the simple fact that *Panzer Saga* squared off against Square's *Xenogears* in the Land of the Rising Sun ("Oh my God! You killed *Panzer*! You bastard!"), players the world over have been hoping that something, nay, anything would come along and fill the void that was left behind. However, Polyphony Digital Studios reckons they may have just the thing. Something put together by a couple of ex-Team Andromeda members (the developer of the *Panzer* franchise at Sega) and featuring the force of the *Gran Turismo* engine to back it up. The game was to be *Omega Boost*... a game that had a slim chance at bringing the shooter back to raging life.

However, I should have known something was amiss from the start. In this industry, it's common knowledge that if a game suddenly appears out of nowhere (especially from a high profile developer) with no fanfare, no hype and no pre-release coverage, something is amiss. So when the team that produced *Gran Turismo* simpl dropped a little bombshell on the gaming press in the form of *Omeg Boost*, I was understandably excited — a shooter from the makers o *Gran Turismo*, featuring the same basic engine?! Sign me up! Alas this is where the "I should have known..." part kicks in. But before regale you, the reader, with a tale of woe and what 'could have been, let's take a look at what initially promised to be a stunning foray ont your PlayStation that may have made you forget about the loomin specter of Dreamcast at least for an hour or two.

Now I was never the biggest fan of *Gran Turismo* (racing game generally aren't my bag), but I could appreciate the raging engin and the 'look how far they've come since *Motor Toon*' aesthetic. Bu when they announced out of nowhere that they were doing a shoot er, I suddenly became very interested. And when it was mentione that the game would be strictly cast in the mold of *Panzer Dragoo* (one of the Saturn's finest moments), I became all the more enrap tured and enamored with the idea. Screens filled with beautifu graphics poured into the office, and buzz began to build. Never min the fact that the backgrounds appeared to be devoid of detail (wh



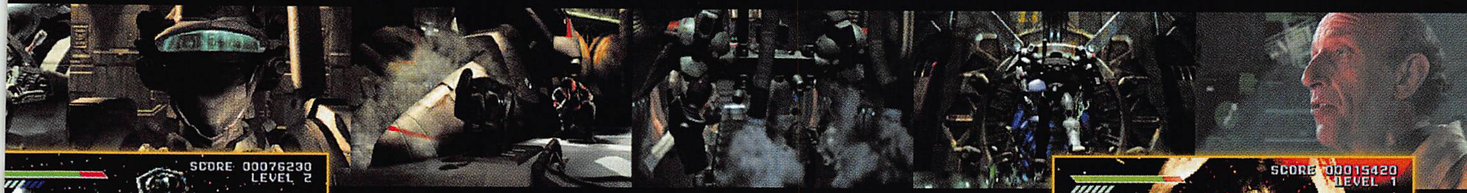


ECM: If it doesn't say Team Andromeda...

Developer - Polyphony Digital Studios
Publisher - Sony

1 Player
Available Now Japan

Viewpoint Score :60







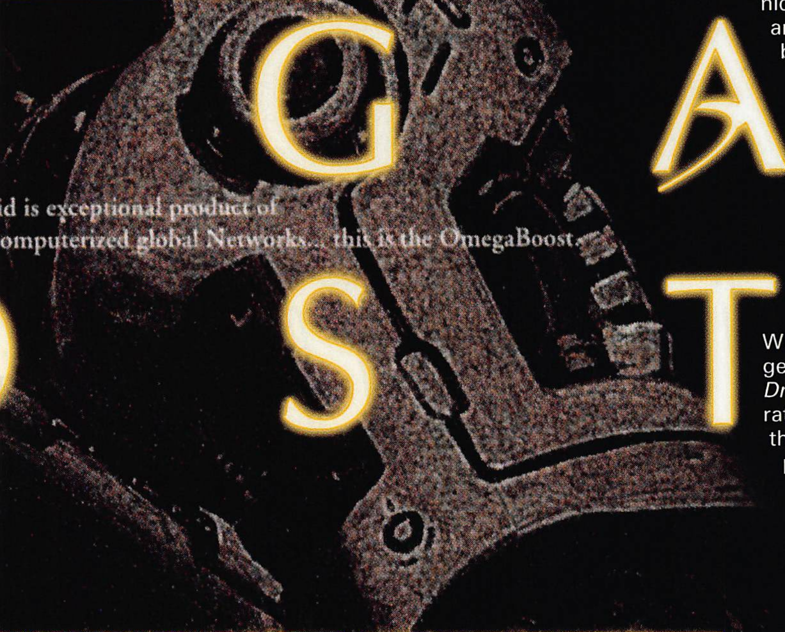


could notice such things when the heir apparent to *PD* was nearly here?), and the beautiful environment-mapping only made a cameo appearance in the instant replays (a la *GT*). No, this game was going to be amazing, if it killed me. <Sigh>, it nearly did.

Let me take a moment to describe the blazing 'gameplay' this title features: fly through a series of graphically bland backgrounds (wow, flat, featureless terrain...that's excitement), utilizing the tried-and-true 'lock-on' laser from *Panzer Dragoon* and the *RayStorm* series from Taito, easily annihilating everything in your path. And when I say 'easy', I mean 'easy enough for someone that only has three fingers and two brain cells' simple. The game essentially involves 'piloting' your mech, 'rail-style', across numerous missions, rotating 360 degrees and taking out every single enemy that approaches with your lock-on lasers. Sure you have a standard gun, but who needs that when all that's required is the painfully simplistic lock-on gun to mow down foe after mechanized foe. Sure, there's also the nice ability to 'speed up' and 'slow down' the mech, but it all boils down to spinning in dizzying circles while trying to target your enemies. It does get better about halfway through the game, but by then it's too little too late.

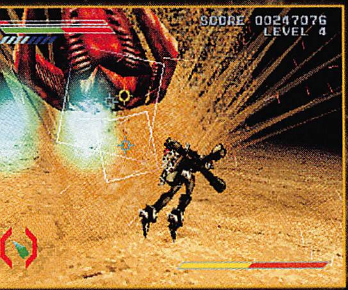






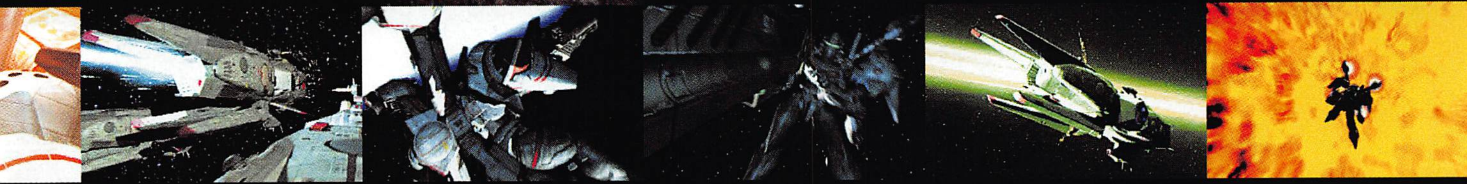
As for the visuals (you'd expect at least this part to be amazing) they're pretty solid. While it's not what I'd call revolutionary or ground-breaking, they get the job done, but they're not even on par with Sega's *Panzer Dragoon Zwei* which came around years ago. Sure, the frame rate is better, and there are 'real' transparencies at work here, but the scope of the environments themselves are mind-numbingly poor. Most of them, and try not to gag here, resemble Sega's *Galaxy Force* coin-op from years back. In fact, if there was more pop-up present in *OB* (there is almost none, actually) I'd have preferred *GF*'s backgrounds, <sigh>. The mech designs are solid, and the *Omega Boost* mech suit is well-rendered but for the most part, everything from the explosions to the CG cut scenes is simply sub-par. Certainly not what you'd expect from the *GT* team.

There really isn't that much more to say. Even with some nice extra levels after you complete the initial campaign, as well as a decent training mode, there's not much hope for this one — it simply gets too old, too fast. I can pretty much guarantee that you won't be seeing a sequel to this one (the Japanese mags shredded it too), but I suppose if you're starved for anything resembling *Panzer* this might do...but I doubt it. File this one under 'coulda been a contender.'





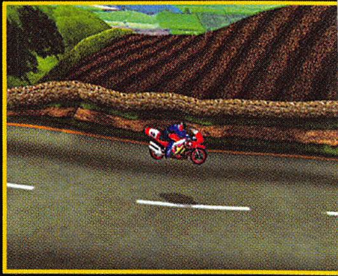
ECM spends most workdays "locking-on" to hapless editors around the office, and unleashing the dreaded "ADS Attack" upon them.



Dreamcast



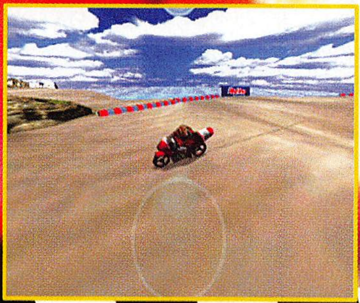

There's no denying that the Dreamcast, in its Japanese infancy, has been littered with a number of poorly crafted games, just like every other platform launch. While I'd love to believe that someday a system will come with a launch library of ONLY ultra-quality titles (are you listening, Sega of America?), the reality is that bad games will always surface (and sell, believe it or not). My fear is that the quality titles (*Soul Calibur* and *Shen Mue* to name a few) will wind up being too few and far between. Games such as *RLR*, that pale in comparison, are destined to fall by the wayside.

Red Line Racer is Imagineer's second PC-port Dreamcast game (their previous effort was *Incoming*). *Red Line Racer* isn't a bad game... rather, it's pretty mediocre. It also happens to be the only superbike racer on the DC.

RLR is basically your standard motorcycle racer... in my mind, that means uninspired track design and poor play mechanics. Let's just say that *RLR* isn't the *Gran Turismo* of super bike games.

What saves it partially are the crisp graphics, smooth frame rate, and decent control. In fact, compared to *Monaco GP2* and the early rev of *Buggy Heat*, *RLR* controls like a dream. Believe me, if you attempted to play either of those titles (oh... the pain) you'll understand my point.


In all honesty however, *RLR* could have been a PlayStation game. And as I've mentioned, the hi-res graphics and frame-rate (60 frames!) were the only features that showcased the DC's power. Basically, if you're looking to wow friends with a DC game, this is not the title to do it with (try *Sonic* or *HOTD2* instead).

REDLINE RACER




Alas, the track design in *RLR* leaves a lot to be desired. Each stage failed to showcase any severe jumps, and the AI... well let's just say that your competition is almost non-existent. Even after crashing several times, I was able to catch my competitors in almost record time.

While Imagineer might not have a huge hit on their hands, *RLR* is certainly worth seeing... at least once. Like *Incoming*, it sort of falls in the DC's grey area... it has its moments, just not too many.





When Fury was a kid he refused to ride his bicycle because it was two-tired.

FURY: Imagineer finally serves up a bit of originality on the DC.	Developer - Criterion Studios Publisher - Imagineer	1-2 Players Available Now Japan	Viewpoint Score :75

PlayStation

Now here's a title which came and went with little fanfare in Japan. At first, I couldn't understand it — the preliminary screenshots looked good; the omic book-style artwork was refreshing; and the sci-/adventure theme was interesting. So what was wrong? Music crescendos> Let's see...

It started out like any other day. The California sun was hining, people were smiling, and E3 was coming... It eemed innocent enough — a colorful, comic book-like ackage sporting a generic main character holding a **very** ig gun. The demo movie was appealing: full of explo-ons, "heart-pounding excitement," and yummy eye andy. The sci-fi intro recounts the story of an ambas-ador's ship which has disappeared in area Z3. A rescue eam is dispatched to investigate and.... "Who could've imagined what lay ahead of us?" ...indeed.



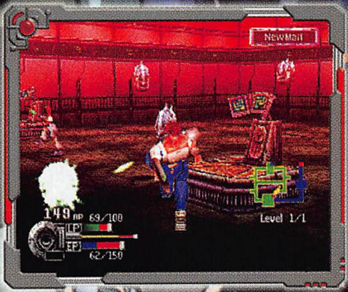


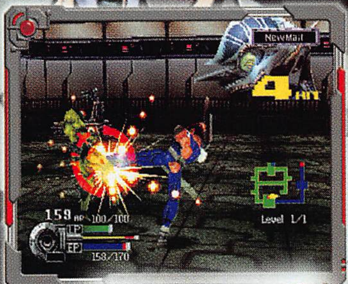




As soon as the game started, I had *Hybrid Heaven* flashbacks. No, not the butchered frame-rate variety, but the feeling of being trapped in gray-colored, *Alien Trilogy*-like, close-quarter environments. The next thing I noticed was the very bassy, aggressive heavy metal soundtrack, which got me pumped for action. Once the combat began, I was so engrossed with it that the threat of impending doom never occurred to me. The lock-on was like *Zelda*, and hit sparks exploded left and right as alien after alien fell to my devastating combos. Yeah, baby...

Ten minutes later, the realization set in... and my cry of pain echoed from every corner of the office. "NNNNOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!" It took me that long to see past the shiny exterior, candy-coated graphics, head-banging sounds, and intriguing story. For deep down inside, this was... <sigh> a dungeon game.





That's a fate I wouldn't wish upon my worst enemy. After all, what could be worse than having a gorgeous exterior, but the heart of a dungeon game? We're talkin' hour upon hour of exploring uncharted dungeons, fighting aliens, and looking forward to... the next uncharted dungeon floor. To some, this may be fun; but I find it tedious. Besides, I thought Square's *Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon 1* and *2* were more than enough to satisfy any anti-social cravings one might've had.

Other than that minor issue of 'dungeon gameplay,' *Cyber Org* is above average. The soundtrack rocks, with an impressive ensemble of electric guitar, bass, and synthesized drums. The engine is solid, animation is plentiful, and control is tight. Unfortunately, the camera must continually be shifted manually, as you turn left and right down every corridor. There's also some slowdown when the screen is jam-packed with alien hordes (don't worry, it doesn't happen often). But the main problem is that monotonous gameplay.

サイバーオーグ
CYBER ORG







So sci-fi dungeon dwellers, look no further. If you liked *CMD 1* and *2*, then you'll also want to look into *Cyber Org*. But if exploration and exit-finding isn't your idea of a good time, then save yourself the grief and look elsewhere.

Eggo prefers to spend his time on a sunny beach rather than the dank recesses of an alien dungeon.

VIEWPOINT SCORE **:79**	DEVELOPER - FUZZ BOX PUBLISHER - SQUARESOFT	1 PLAYER AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN	EGGO: *TJ's MYSTERIOUS DUNGEON?*	





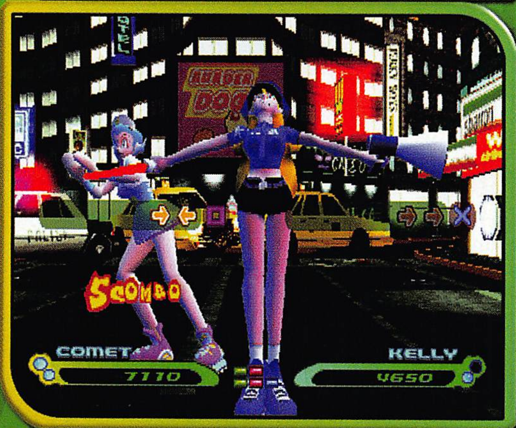


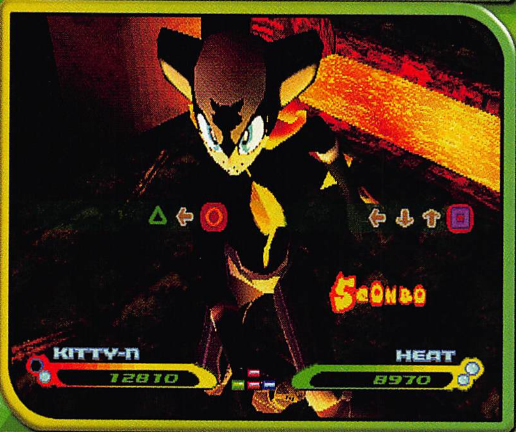
Two Christmases ago, Enix's *Bust-A-Move* debuted in Japan with very little fanfare, because practically no one saw this toe-tappin' stocking stuffer coming. But, it made a **huge** impact on the *GameFan* office for many weeks afterwards. I still remember trying to work with that catchy Japanese music pounding away at my eardrums from multiple angles (Shidoshi's cubicle, Dangohead, Waka's... talk about stereo sound!) — a cacophonous (ECM's Note: err, uh, is that a word?) work environment, for sure.

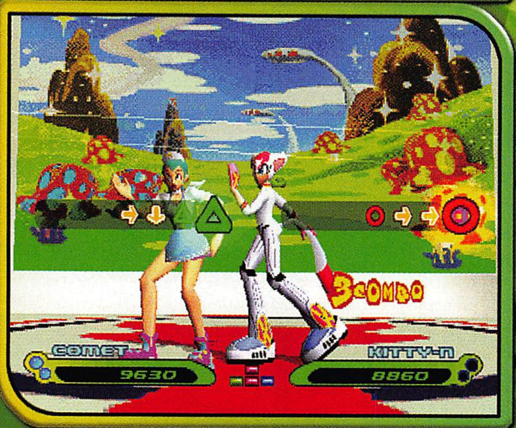
Back then, it had innovative gameplay, stellar visuals, and bitchin' music. Over a year later, the sequel has improved play, better graphics, and... that's it. Now about how it feels...

Originally viewed as a mere *Parappa* clone, *Bust-A-Move*'s gameplay came down to hitting a button in time to every fourth beat. The catch is the d-pad movements you have to sneak in between button presses. Back then, it was enough of a twist to distinguish it from *Parappa*, but challenging enough that the rhythm-impaired fled in terror ("I... don't... dance..."). *BAM2* builds on that gameplay by adding ducking, reflecting attacks, stealing solos, a scoring system (rounds are now won by points, not a subjective camera), and new command modes. When you select your dancer, you also choose a command mode: easy (no button presses, just d-pad), normal (d-pad then button, like the original), and mix (buttons mixed with d-pad)... for the true dance-game enthusiast. This new stuff, combined with the scoring system, makes for a much better multi-player game compared to the first.

Visually, *BAM* was a sweet piece of... umm, eye candy. Sixty frames per second and hi-res!?! Is this a PlayStation game or Model 2? Well, *BAM2* continues that forward progress by taking the visuals to the next level. Backgrounds are a lot more active and eye-popping. Face-off against Shorty, and you'll groove on an amusement park raft ride, replete (™ and © 1999 ECM, all rights reserved) with Jurassic-like dinosaurs, spooky ghosts, and jungle wildlife. New characters are also thrown into the mix (just a figure of speech, not the command











EGGO: Somebody Trax down Avex already... I'm dyin' here.	Developer - Enix Publisher - Enix	1-2 Players Available Now Japan	Viewpoint Score: 79

mode) such as Bi-O (Gas-O's dad), Tsutomu (a Japanese schoolboy), and Comet (a roller-blading waitress)... along with other hidden characters.

Now comes the moment I've been dreading all along... Like ECM when you mention "*Shen Mue*" and "gameplay" in the same sentence, I avoid the topic of *BAM2's* music like the plague. Alas, the music in this game blows! There's no denying it... fans of the first will be in tears when they hear the new 'tunes' (some of them are just boring beats with no lyrics... ugh).



Sadly, Avex Trax (the professional Japanese recording studio responsible for *BAM's* music) is suspiciously absent from the credits of *BAM2*. Did Enix not want to pay the licensing fee? Was the scheduled deadline too soon for Avex's taste? Did the voice of Kitty N not want to go back to video games in favor of a 'real' singing career?

Whatever the deal is, the difference between the music in *BAM* and *BAM2* is like night and day. Unfortunately, *BAM2* is left with the shorter end of the stick; and for all those steps forward with the improved graphics and gameplay, the music is two steps backwards for the product overall. All those new features... gone to waste in one fell swoop... Because who wants to play a dance game with bad music?

When I say bad, I don't mean 'it could've been better, but we'll settle for this' bad. I'm talkin' 'stomach-brewing, vertically moving, partially-digested spew' bad (why, Enix, why?!). Needless to say, this soundtrack won't be on any shopping lists (you buy it, and I'll kill you). In fact, I can't even find one song that I truly enjoy. There are a few which are "decent," but nothing rises above that level.

So what are we left with here... the prodigal son of video games? A game you really want to love, but it keeps screwing up with every new song? In the end, we've got an above-average game (despite the music), which could've been so much more...

Sony published the original *Bust-A-Move* over here as *Bust-A-Groove* (something about copyright infringement with some green dinosaurs?). And technically, they can bring the game to the U.S., while changing all the music. It's wishful thinking, but if Sony took the time to scrap the sounds and start from scratch, we could still see a winner of a game in the U.S. No plans to bring it Stateside have been announced yet, but we'll keep you posted.

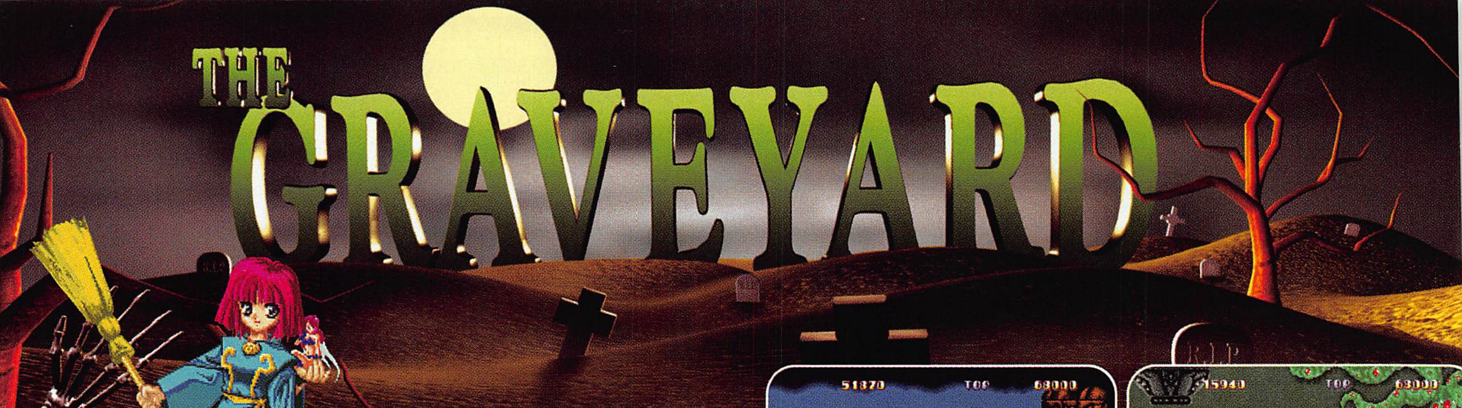
Eggo has been known to bust a move in real life... after many a beer and loud music at an E3 party.



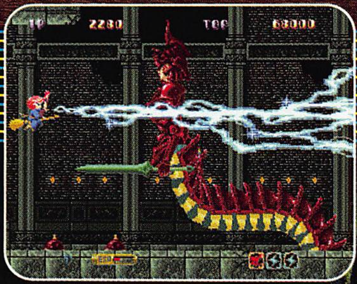




















Bust out the hankies and wipe away the tears. It's time to wax nostalgic (yet again) on a time when 'games were games' and gameplay was a norm... never a question. It's a *GameFan* soapbox moment; and this month we're lookin' at Success' *Cotton Original*, which has been recently re-released as a PlayStation import.

In case you missed the Japanese arcade game and its many console kinfolk (PC Engine, Super Famicom and Mega Drive 'gaiden' *Panorama Cotton*), don't feel too bad; many people don't know about this classic because the game was never released domestically. *CO* also spawned two different Saturn games (*Cotton 2: Magical Night Dreams* and *Cotton Boomerang*), both of which never came out here... but no need to go down **that** road, right?

OK, OK, happy thoughts... think happy thoughts: layer upon layer of parallax, transparencies, multi-jointed bosses. Ahh... all that 16-bit juiciness is here; and if you're anything like me, you'll be yearning for more. Thanks to retro-gaming, titles like *Cotton* are given new life, to painfully remind you of what today's video games are lacking. So turn your back on the Polygon Menace for a second and jump into the world of all things *Cotton*...

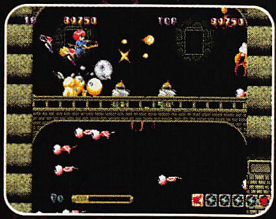
First off, it's a happy place. The main character, Cotton, is a broom-stick-riding witch who has fairies for friends, and cruises the town to some very upbeat MIDI tunes. Someone has stolen the magical prism, and now the whole world's out of whack. Only you have the power to right this wrong by rescuing the Princess, retrieving the prism, and restoring order to the universe.

To aid in your journey, pick up magic crystals, and they'll power-up your normal shot. They also double as one-time super shots; just hold the button down to charge up, and let go to let loose the magic.

Come to think of it, I don't remember if the slowdown was this bad in the OG *Cotton*. But the PlayStation version bogs down to some unhealthy levels when the screen gets busy with bosses and magic. There's also a scant second of loading time whenever you first meet a boss. Don't let either of these dissuade you from revisiting or 'first time visiting' the land of *Cotton Original: Fantastic Night Dreams*. **Eggo**

FANTASTIC NIGHT DREAMS COTTON ORIGINAL





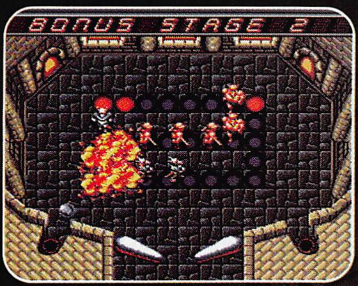


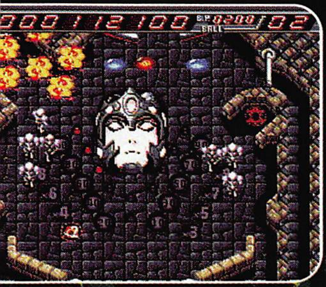










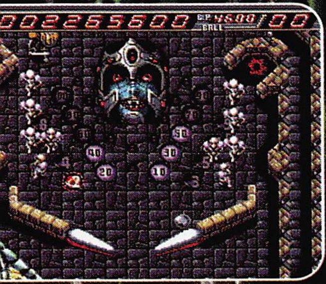

And on the Eighth day, He created *Devil's Crush.*" Ever since then, home pinball games haven't been the same. It's as if console developers looked at *Devil's Crush* and said, "Damn, we can't top this, so we better not try." Pathetic isn't it, that we're up to 128-bit, and a pinball game of this caliber has yet to be rivaled.

Known as *Devil's Crush* on Turbo Duo, *Devil Crash* on PC Engine, and *Dragon's Fury* on the Genesis, this is the be-all-end-all of console pinball. Even today, the game looks decent, and it plays as well as ever. So well, in fact, that it was a GPA-killer. Thankfully, I was in high school instead of college when it came out. If not, it might've ruined my grades (*Street Fighter II* ended up doing that single-handedly).

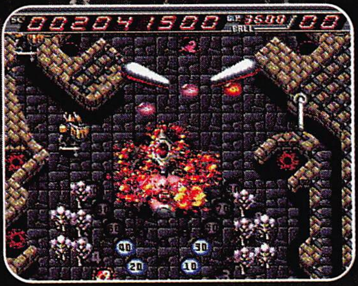
You know you played this game too much if it interfered with: a) school b) work or c) personal life. The true *DC* sausages would master the timing to earn that fourth ball every time (there's a countdown for that Match, and you can time it). How come games aren't as addicting as this one any more?

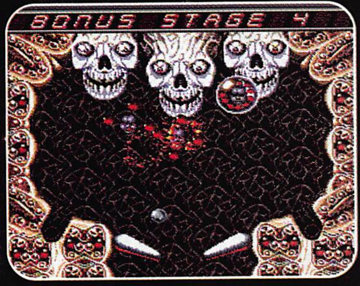
Part of the addiction had to do with that third ball. It would last forever, because almost all avenues of death were blocked until you got to a bonus stage at the top. The playing field was divided into three sections, with flippers at the bottom of each, like a triple-tiered pinball game. The idea was to keep the ball in the top two areas since a mistake there wouldn't be fatal; plus that's where the most fun was to be had. In the middle area, getting the ball into either of the side holes would transform a beautiful woman's face into a menacing reptile, peeling back the layers one at a time (hmmm... women... evil...).

Looking back, it's surprising that a game better than this hasn't been invented yet. There's no multi-ball, just the one 'board,' and the single song to go with that board... yet it's still the pinnacle of pinball. If you can find *Devil's Crush* and a Turbo Duo (who knows what you'll find at a garage sale or used game store?), shell out the dough to relive a game that crushes the competition. "And on the Ninth day, He rested..." **Eggo**



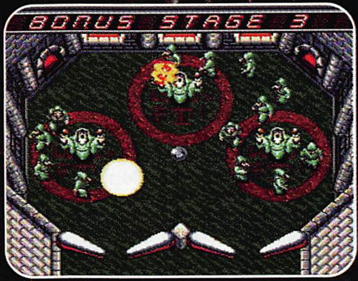


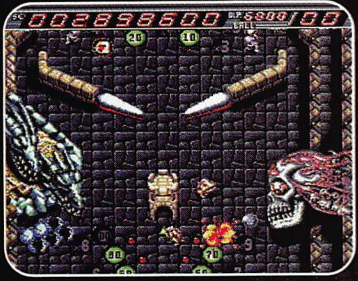


Devil's Crush







Who will save your soul ?



neo AnimeFan

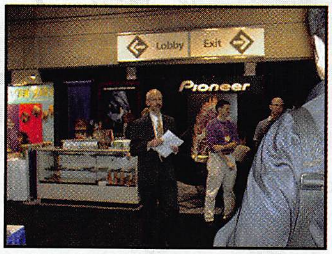
More than just "the anime section" - Anime, Manga, Asian Live-Action, J-pop, Culture, and all related product

You know, this month is a pretty bad month. Why? Well, all of the anime I reviewed this issue was quality all the way across the board, and any time I give out decent reviews to everything I feel for some reason like I'm doing something wrong. Sometimes you can't help but wonder if maybe the stuff isn't all that good, and instead you're just being generous in your grading. Know what I mean? No, probably not. Anyhow, a lot of you have told me that you really miss my individual ratings for various parts of an anime (animation, dub quality, music, etc.). I've been toying with the idea of bringing those rating back, and you'll probably see ther show up again once I've figured ou how to fit them into the layout (th section looks horribly crammed a it is). Welp, that's about it for th issue — E3 was a blast, I got th chance to check out the new G offices, not to mention say hello t a lot of old friends. ***- shidoshi***

Special Feature

Anime at E3

Believe it or not, E3 isn't just about video games — there were a variety of other "electronic entertainment" products on display. One of those, to the pleasure of yours truly, was anime. Yes, I'd finally get the chance to meet some of the people I've talked to over the phone for a couple years now face to face, and see what kinds of new things they have planned for the near future.



First on the agenda was a meeting that I had set up with Kara, the PR goddess over at **Urban Vision**. Urban Vision didn't have a booth at E3, but Kara attended the first day so we made plans to run into each other. I had a picture that was taken of Kara and myself, but sadly the picture didn't come out too well (I seem to have some curse over my head that makes any photographic which include me in them not turn out). But, I will tell you this... intelligent, beautiful, AND she loves anime... what more could a fanboy ask for. **[grin]** Next, I checked out **Pioneer**'s little corner of E3, where I drooled over the huge library of anime DVD titles they had on display and got the chance to say hello to Chad. Seeing as how Chad is still willing to talk to me as I tell him that we HAVE to have a DVD collection of ***The Hakkenden*** pretty much every time I talk to him, there's no question of how good a guy he is. I did manage to snag a preview copy of ***Lain*** from Chad during the second day of E3, so we all have him to thank for my little preview on the facing page. Next up was **ADV Films**, the company which continues to prove that it means business when it comes to anime. I sat down with Rod from ADV and had a nice chat about the company, what new things they have in store, what their plans for the future are, and what their stance on DVD is. Let me tell you this — after our talk, I couldn't be happier about how the future of ADV DVD is looking. I think we're going to see som big things from them, things that will mak all DVD fans out there proud. Finally, bumped into the **Central Park Media** boot While my usual contacts weren't there, I di get a chance to meet a few of the guys fro the DVD division, who were very cool an very receptive to hearing my undying sup port for the format.





Beyond the anime companies themselves, there were a few other points of interest at E3. Over at the Nintendo booth, some of the Nintendo girls were handing out special edition versions of the Pikachu card from the ***Pokemon*** card game. What's specia about it, you ask? Well, it's got a littl "E3" logo stamped in gold on the middl right side of the card. Knowing how ho Pokemon products are, this might jus become a collector's item. ***- shidoshi***

Audio Delights

Chara: Junior Sweet

J-pop • Toy Boy / Avex Trax
12 tracks • 1 CD • Best Hits Collection
B+

A while back I was driving around Omaha with my friend in his car, and he had a tape with some Japanese singer player. The singer had an angelic and childlike voice, and this one certain song came on that was just do damn catchy that I instantly fell in love with it. After that, every time I would go out with him, I demanded that he play that song again so that I could hear it. He told me that the singer was Chara — and that before he killed me, he recommended that I buy the CD for myself so that I wouldn't keep making him play it. I found out that the name of that song was "Yasashii Kimochi," just one of twelve tracks on an older Chara album called ***Junior Sweet***. As soon as I found a place that carried the album, I ordered myself a copy, so that I could put the song on repeat and listen to my heart's content.







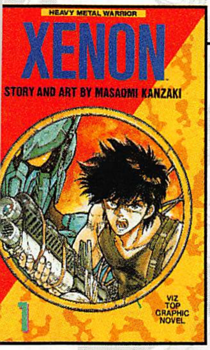
One thing that you learn about Chara pretty quickly is that she knows how to make music. Almost every song on ***JS*** has an awesome beat, so much so that even those out there who don't usually like J-pop might find tracks that they really dig. Chara's interesting and creative beats, mixed with her ethereal voice, produce a combination that is as wonderful as it is weird. From the opening track "Milk," to the final trac "Seshinaimono," this is an album of song from an artist that really knows what she' doing. The only real uncertainty that I ha about Junior Sweet was that some of th tracks weren't as engrossing as others. Fo some of the songs, they gra on to you instantly and don' let go, but for others, you' either dislike them or have t spend a lot of time listenin to them before they warm o you. It's not that any of he songs are bad by any means it's just that some of the don't show the power o imagination of other tracks. Still, ***Junio Sweet*** is an album that I would recommen to anyone out there interested in J-pop especially those who think that J-pop i nothing but mindless drivel. ***- shidoshi***



" Oh, sorry, I've got a cold... "

Manga Scene

What's New in Print This Month



Xenon

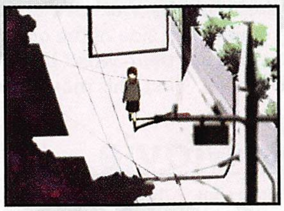
Action • Viz • 13+
various pages • US Format • Graphic Novel

B

Yeah, okay, so ***Xenon*** is quite old, but I decided to do it as a sort of "manga retro review" both because it's still a great read, and it's pretty much what made me the anime/manga fan that I am today. I was rummaging through the back issues in my local comic store one day (no doubt looking for issues of **X-men**, which I was into for some insane reason) when I stumbled upon this comic called **Xenon**. The artwork looked weird to me, the idea of reading a black and hite comic seemed silly, yet for some reason, I picked up a few issues just for cks. I took them home, I read them, and it wasn't long before I was talking y mother into taking me back to the comic shop so that I could purchase more them. Soon, I was addicted to the adventures of Asuko Kano (I hope I membered that name right), and snatched up each issue as they came out til I was crushed to find the series ending — I was used to the "never-ending US storyline" mentality, so to only see a comic run for twenty-three issues was insane to me. But even though **Xenon** ended, it's effects lived on in me far deeper than I could imagine: it opened me up to the world of Japanese manga, it allowed me to see past the color artwork, outrageously lame superheroes, and "storylines that should have ended ages ago" of the American comic scene, and the characters helped to inspire me when creating the characters that would end up becoming the mainstays of my own world and tales. **Xenon** is a really cool manga saga brought over to us by Viz, and the graphic novels can still probably be found from a variety of manga retailers. If you've never read it, you should. ***- shidoshi***

Special Preview

Serial Experiments Lain

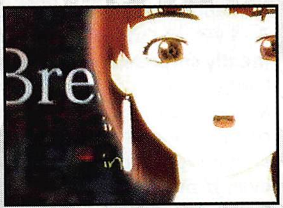




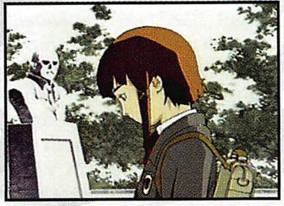
hirteen year old Lain appears to be an everyday stuent in her Jr. High, but the day after her classmate ommits suicide, she receives an e-mail from the dead udent: "I'm still here. I just abandoned my body." oon, we find Lain experiencing what may be e merging of the real world of the flesh, and e wired world of the computers. If nothing se, ***Lain*** definitely sounds interesting. A lot of ories recently have dealt with the idea of not nowing what is real and what isn't (***The Matrix*** probably the most recent example), and it's n idea that both makes you think, and begins o somewhat freak you out if you think about e whole thing too much. ***Lain*** received the Excellence Prize" of the 1998 Media Art estival by the Agency for Cultural Affairs in apan, and has been quite the talk around the nime world. With it's intriguing storyline and ch artwork, it's no wonder why it's become uch a hot topic as of late. How will US fans eact to ***Lain*** and her world? We'll find out in uly, as Serial Experiments Lain sees release on ur shores on both VHS and DVD. For more information n ***Lain***, check out the AF News Service a few pages om here, or Pioneer's official ***Serial Experiments Lain*** ebsite, which is being updated all of the time (which ou can find by going to www.pioneeranimation.com). ***shidoshi***











Breaking News

adies and gentlemen, boys and girls ... the npossible has happened. Yes, it seems, as razy as it may sound, that Shidoshi as a fan. While visiting the GF eadquarters for a week in order o travel with them to E3, a myserious letter arrived addressed to hidoshi. Upon opening it, there as found to be a short letter and a iece of fanart directed at the resident nime fanboy. Shocking as it may seem, ot only does Shidoshi actually have a fan, but a FEMALE fan. The staff was stunned, many searched the papers for reports of a freak snowstorm coming over Hades, while others claimed it a sign of the coming judgement day. Shidoshi, of course, fell to the ground in shock when he read the letter, and he only awakened when the GF staff blared the theme to ***Ah! My Goddess*** on the nearest stereo. So, with this latest letter, the Official Shidoshi Fan Club explodes its membership roster to a whopping ... one! At this rate, Shidoshi will soon be the darling of the entire world!



AnimeFan rates each title reviews on a scale of A (excellent), B (good), C (average), D (poor), and F (horrible). Remember, a grade of C isn't bad, and only when a title starts getting into the D range should you start to consider avoiding it at all costs. For DVD titles, two scores are present, one for the anime itself, and the other for it's DVD presentation. The DVD grade covers everything from image quality to package to extras, so while a DVD may look beautiful, it could loose points for having no extras or other such issues.

Guide to Ratings Codes

We'll use this example:
Sub | Dub
VHS | LD | DVD

Black: The title is available in that format / language. So, for our example, the title is out in both Sub and Dub on VHS.

Underlined: The version being reviewed. So, we're reviewing the VHS Sub version.

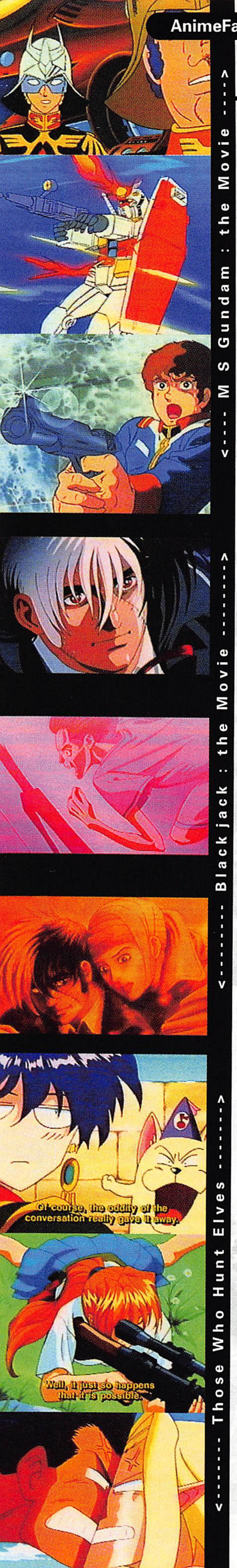
Greyed: Not available. So, our title isn't out on LD.

Red: Coming soon / planned. Our example title is planned for release on DVD.

Send comments, letters, artwork to:

AnimeFan
6301 DeSoto Avenue
Unit #E
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Or :
shidoshi@gamefan.com



Anime Drive In

What's playing in anime this month

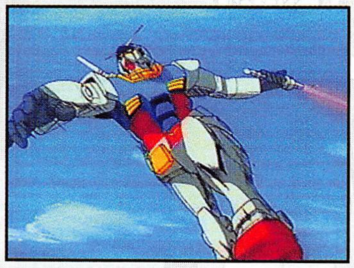
Mobile Suit Gundam: The Movie

AF Best of the Issue!

Adventure • Movie • Bandai Ent. • 11+
148 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

A-

Trying to fit the storyline of ***Mobile Suit Gundam*** into a quick little paragraph is about as easy a task as getting me to refer to Belldandy as "just some anime chick." Many an anime has been based around the idea of an "average" youth being forced to pilot a fantastic giant mecha in order to help defend the Earth, and mankind, from certain doom. However, it's a pretty safe bet that most have gained some inspiration from ***Gundam***. ***Gundam*** came onto the scene just as the 80's were showing up, and took "robot anime" to a whole new level — instead of simply being about the robot and its pilot, we were thrust into a world full of political factions, brutal wars, and opposing sides with no clear good guys and bad guys. It wasn't just robot versus robot anymore, it was brother against brother, teammates forming bonds and watching their friends die, families and worlds being torn apart and destroyed by war. It's about damn time that ***Gundam*** came over to our side of the ocean, but I have to wonder how many fans out there won't be able to appreciate it (or, at least, this movie). First, this movie was made back in 1981 .. man, I was but a wee six years o then. The art style, and animation, compared to today standards ... well, doesn't compare, being brutally ho est. For those of us who can appreciate and enjoy th retro look, it's great, but I know a lot of people out the who can't. As well, this harkens back to the days of th "epic" anime movies, when it seemed like the show sin ply would never end. At 148 minutes (and a huge stor line), I wonder how many casual fans out there will act ally make it all of the way through. But, for the real otal out there, none of that matters. ***Gundam*** is an instit tion, something that is far bigger in scope and impo



tance than maybe any of us US fa could ever really understand. It's g the variety of storylines and casts ***Star Trek***, but the character develo ment and personality of *Star Wars*, an could easily be said to be to Japan wh the latter is to the United States. Man English fans might not "get" this show some won't be able to sit through it an others won't be able to stand the o school animation. However, for thos who can appreciate and embrace ***MSG:tM***, a whole sid of anime culture that has long been missing from o shores will be open to you — and the first movie is but start to the adventures that await. ***- shidoshi***

Blackjack: the Movie

Drama • Movie • Manga Ent. • 15+
95 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

B+

I hold a lot of respect for Osamu Tezuka, and always will, but I've got to be perfectly honest about something: I've NEVER understood ***Blackjack***, nor the appeal of the title. Maybe it's the fact that I have no interest in medical drama, or that I think the idea of a story based around a "master surgeon" is silly, who knows. So, it was only natural that going into this movie, I was looking forward to it about as a turkey looking forward to Thanksgiving. And yet, as I'm forced to say quite often it seems, I was greatly surprised by what I saw. The very first thing that I noticed was a quality of animation that simply blew me away. I mean, wow, ***Blackjack*** has an insanely high level of animation at some points, equal to the best that the anime world has to offer. As the movie went on, however, it became clear to me that the animation wasn't the only thing of quality about this one. Something about ***Blackjack the Movie*** was different — be it the move from manga to anime, the intriguing storyline, the characters, the more mature theme and style, I don't know — but I was drawn into this one far more than I expected to be. The struggle of ***Blackjack*** to find the cure to the strange bout of "super humans" that breaks out across the Earth was done extremely well, with supporting characters that are strong and direction and scenes that enhance the mood and atmosphere perfectly, keeping a good pace throughout the movie while also having the right amount of exploratory scenes. This is one of those movies where everything is crafted so well that it doesn't matter who the movie is based around, and even though I'm not a big fan of ***Blackjack*** himself it didn't matter here. So, while I haven't been converted into a ***Blackjack*** fan thanks to this movie, it really blew me away and made me glad that I'm in a position to get the chance to see titles that I might not normally check out on my own. This is a wonderful movie that stands very well on it's own, so even if you aren't a ***Black Jack*** fan, you should do yourself a favor and see this movie. ***- shidoshi***

DNA Sights 999.9

Adventure • OAV • Urban Vision • 11+
90 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

B

Ah, the future, a time of hope, prosperity, peace, and happines for the Earth and its creatures. Well, maybe in another dime sion, for in ours, our dear little blue and green planet is alway the target of every disaster imaginable. This time, Earth ha been ravaged by a large shower of meteors, and from the rub ble the remains of mankind does its best to rise up and rebui itself. But there are those who have other plans for us, an work to use the weakness of the planet and its people to the advantage to control us. Enter Tetsuro Daiba, a young surviv who finds out that he, and two others, have been given strang powers when one of the meteors crashed in their hometow Daiba, along with a young girl and a psychic cat, are forced t battle those who would control mankind for the safety an protection of our future. Can the three young heroes ban together and defeat the evil menace, or will our only hopes fo survival fail before they can even fully realize their powers Please excuse me for a moment, but I've got to vent about th ... I'm getting SICK of these "teaser" anime! Why do compa nies make one or two volumes of something, something rea ly good, and then just leave it at that?! I know, it's economic demands, whatever their bosses want, etc., but it still drive me absolutely batty. This show suffers the same kind of thin that ***Sakura Wars*** does — it introduces the characters, crafts th story and plot, introduces us to a realized world, starts th adventure, then whoops, it's over. Ugh. Of course, with m luck, I probably say this and there's actually twelve more vo umes to it that I don't know about. **[hehe]** Even with the fac that it's just a tease, ***DNA Sights 999.9*** is good while it lasts Leiji Matsumoto fans will no doubt want to grab a copy of thi one, and those of you who aren't familiar with his work migh want to check this out if the idea of jumping into one of his epi titles seems a bit daunting (you should get a taste of his styl at least once — I love the "tall and skinny" look that he' famous for). Sure, *DNA* doesn't compare to his "major" stu like ***Galaxy Express 999***, ***Yamato***, or ***Captain Harlock***, but it' good for what it is. And, hey, the Yamato and Harlock bot make quick cameo appearances, so you could even watch i simply for those five seconds of fun. ***- shidoshi***

"Fat pig..." "WHAT?!" "..Pat.... pat pig..."

Those Who Hunt Elves

Action/Comedy • OAV • ADV Films • 13+ **B**
60 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

h, wacky fantasy-based anime comedies... these things eem to be a dime a dozen anymore. But wait, what's his? Could *Those Who Hunt Elves* actually stand out from lot of them? This series has something going for it, and hat something is its cast. Wacky comedies are usually etter when there is something "off" about the show to hake it ... well, wacky in the first place. With *TWHE*, our eroes are from our world, stuck in this strange fantasy vorld by some means that we don't yet know. Instead of he usual cast, we've got the big bruiser street punk, a ollywood actress, and a young girl with a passion for eavy firearms. I've got to tell you, it really put a smile on ny face to see these people getting a tank pointed right at hem when they had no idea at all what the thing even is. nyhow, the trio are forced to be in this strange place and nd the five pieces to the spell which will get them home . with, conveniently, have been scattered and put pon the bodies of five elven females. So, in rder to get home, the band becomes known as Those Who Hunt Elves," and they travel the and stripping any elves they come across to ee if they carry one of the five pieces. I now what you're saying ... it's got ADV Release" written all over it. I ked *TWHE*, more so than a lot of imilar releases, including *Sorcerer lunters* (whose fans, I'm sure, are lready planning my death). The ontrast of the modern day charcters in the fantasy setting is un, and lends itself to a lot of ossible comedy ... not to nention bringing back thoughts of hat classic American cartoon *Dungeons and Dragons*. I wouldn't all this the cream of the crop vhen it comes to comedy titles, ut it's got enough laughs and harm to make it worth your ime — and the Elven Queen nd Priestess Celcia is an bsolute cutie, so Shidoshi pproves. *- shidoshi*

Magical Project S: Vol 3

Mahou Shoujo • TV (3 eps) • Pioneer • 3+ **B-**
75 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

All Samasi wants is to look forward to her summer vacation from school, but ever since she was forced to become the magical girl "Pretty Sammy," the chances of that are looking slimmer and slimmer. First, Sasami's best friend Misao keeps hearing strange noises in her home, so she asks Sasami to stay the night with her. Of course, we find Sasami's rival Pixy Misa behind it all, and Pretty Sammy must save the day from a spooky ghost. Next, Sasami and her father wind up on the Love-Love Monster Island, where she must not only face every monster she's so far encountered, but the horrible and dreaded "Fake Sick Girl"! Finally, it's a showdown with Ninja vs. Cowboy, until Pixy Misa shows up with her latest monster, Gunman Girl. I think this is probably my favorite volume of *MPS* so far, mainly because the Love-Love Monsters in this one are the best of all those that have shown up (both Fake Sick Girl and Gunman Girl are unquestionably hardcore). The one thing that I noticed while watching, though, is that I'm rooting for Pixy Misa to win, not Pretty Sammy. Misa is definitely the cooler of the two, much more so than that goodie-goodie Sammy, and the way she mixes English in with her Japanese is just so damn adorable. But hey, that's okay, sometimes you've just got to root for the bad girl. **[hehe]** Many of you out there no doubt gag at the thought of this show (or anything else like it), but "magical girl" anime can be loads of fun if you've just got the right attitude towards it (and what can I say, I'm a sucker for cute). Lighthearted and wacky, younger viewers will get a kick from this one, as will older viewers who allow the kid inside of them to show through every now and then. One thing though... is Pixy Misa her own person, or a different side of Misao? I thought it was the latter, but after this volume, I'm a bit confused... *- shidoshi*



Lime by Maurice Williams

Saber Marionette J: Vol 2

Action/Comedy • TV (4 eps) • Bandai • 13+ **B+**
100 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

you've even looked at an issue of Newtype in the last few ears, it was hard to miss the pictures of these freaky lookg girls with big balls magically attached to their heads. I vas never quite sure what was going on with them — these irls from *Saber Marionette J* — but I did know that they ooked like they would probably be very annoying. After seeg them in so many places for such a long period of time, I nally decided that there MUST be something to them, and hat one day I should actually check the show out. *SMJ* is nother of those "hapless guy who has girls falling all over im" types of anime. Basically, we are introduced to a world nade up totally of clones — male clones. Yes, boy and girls, here are NO females to be found on this planet. No females, hat is, except for "marionettes" — emotionless robotic cretions made to do anything their male masters ask of them. taru, our hero, doesn't believe in the idea of having marinettes to do all of your work. Like them or not, however, he eems to begin collecting them — three different marinettes come into his life in different ways and recognize im as their master. But something is different about these marionettes — they have individual personalities, they act on their own and not as slaves, and they all find themselves desiring the affection of Otaru. Of course, just like Tenchi and Ranma and whomever else, our male hero seems reluctant to ever do anything about such situation. Now, see, here is where my friend and I had the big problem — this is SO unrealistic. Yeah, I know, it's just an anime, but for ONCE I'd like to see a guy who is in such a situation actually do what most of us would do — take advantage of it! Even though we've seen the situation before, that doesn't mean that it isn't done in a way that can still be fun and enjoyable. The interaction between the three marionettes — Lime, Cherry, and Bloodberry — is rather funny, and I totally adore Cherry and her sneaky attempts to try to get Lime out of the picture (who is rather oblivious to such attempts). While the character designs for the female characters still bug me a bit (it's like they're trying to make them TOO cute), personality is the key here, and it's hard to hate any of the robotic females. If you like shows like *Tenchi Muyo!*, I'd be willing to bet that you'll like *Saber Marionette J* as well. It's not doing much that we haven't seen before, but it's doing what it does with enough flair and fun that its existence is more than justified. *- shidoshi*

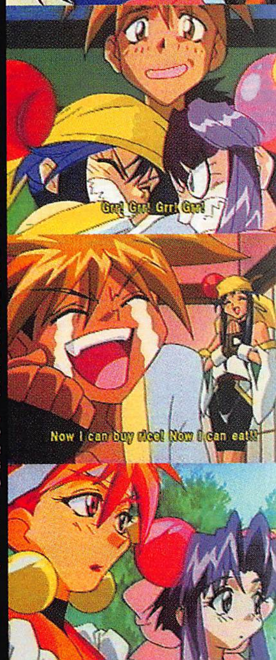
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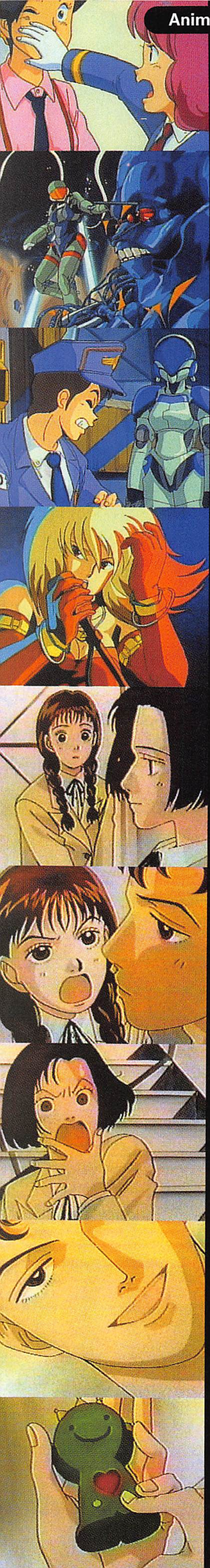


<------- DNA Sights 999.9 ------->



<----- Saber Marionette J : Vol 2 ----->





DVD Connection

Anime - ultra high-qual digital style

Bubblegum Crisis: Volume 1

Action • OAV (3 eps) • AnimEigo/M2K • 13+
75 min • Sub | Dub • VHS | LD | DVD

Anime **B+** DVD **C-**

Anime

Well... it's ***Bubblegum Crisis***. Do I have to say more? This is a classic, one of those titles that helped to shape and influence the future of the anime world. The art is a bit dated, the animation gets pretty bad at times, but the story and characters are still as strong as ever. You've either seen ***BGC*** and already have it in your collection, or you haven't seen it because this is the first time you've ever heard of that "anime" stuff.

DVD

First, the good: the image quality looks awesome, breathing new life into an older anime, and the subtitling job is some of the best to grace anime DVD titles to date. Sadly, however, what should be the prefect version of such a classic is marred with a number of flaws. The packaging on the re-release is certainly better than the original packaging, but I've still got a few gripes about it. The part of the cover with the "Bubblegum Crisis" title has this totally silly sparkly texture to it (sort of like those stickers you used to get from vending machines), and the font is done in pink and yellow — it looks like something that would have been considered cool in the '80s. As well, one of the things that stands out most on the cover is the big "DVD Multiplay" logo, which gets way too much priority on the case if you ask me. The rest of the design is beautiful, and t might have been my favorite anime DVD cover had t multiplay logo been smaller and at the bottom, and h they used the official logo (I know it exists, it was used the ***BGC*** Chroma-Cels) in a decent color scheme. A bigg and slightly more important gripe I had was that each O. episode (1 - 3) was a different track on the DVD. On m titles, all of the anime is on the main track, and is brok up via chapter stops — and as ***BGC*** is not, you can't just there and forward chapter through the entire DVD. slight annoyance, but something that was done for no r son that I can think of. And, unfortunately, I ran into another problem — on my player, the subtitles myste ously disappear shortly after chapter 2 begins. Trying find out what the problem was, I contacted the tech su port for M2K, and found that all three volumes of the s ond pressing of ***BGC*** DVD suffer from various problem The irony of this fact is that the second pressing was do to get rid of all of the problems that the FIRST pressi had. I'm not saying that M2K is releasing them purpo with bugs, but the amount of problems that the ***BGC*** dis have had is just insane, and far worse than any other D title problems that I've ever heard about. Either M needs to get their act together and do something abo ensuring future quality, or AnimEigo needs to find a diff ent company to produce their DVD titles. A third pressi is supposedly set to hit in August, and I recommend a fan considering purchasing these discs to wait until th and see how those copies fair. ***- shidoshi***

Non-US Anime

Great anime straight from Japan

Interesting how things work out sometimes ... I had originally planned to feature Sakura Tsuushin in this section this month, but then I found out that ADV is actually bringing it out here in America! (more on that in the news section) Anyhow, instead, I'm bringing you a look at another fabulous anime, one that I actually want to see come out here more than pretty mu anything else right now — ***Hana Yori Dango***. Next mon I'll look at ***Photon***, an insanely funny comedy from AIC th is sort of a cross between ***El Hazard*** and ***Tenchi Mu*** Until then, here's ***Hana Yori Dango***... ***- shidoshi***

Hana Yori Dango

Drama / Shoujo • TV • Toei • 15+
30 min • VHS | LD | DVD

A

Tsukushi didn't really want much from attending the high-society school, Eitoku Gakuen. A decent education and slipping through the years of schooling without standing out at all — that's all she asked. Unfortunately, that all changed one day when her good friend, Makiko, accidentally knocked over the leader of F4 — the elite, four member group of rich boys who pretty much run the school. Faced with the horror of seeing her friend be ridiculed by the group, Tsukushi stands up for Makiko and insults the F4. From that day on, she is doomed — doomed by the F4 and their ruthless tricks, doomed by the student at the school who follow the F4 around like sheep and do their bidding. Tsukushi wanted only a quiet high school life, but now she has become the student to stand up for the F4, if only she can actually survive such a role. Refreshing ... that's exactly what ***Hana Yori Dango*** is. I felt almost the same way when I first watched this one as I did when I first watched ***Revolutionary Girl Utena***, for the two share a number of similar aspects. Both are rather surreal, a look into the social organism that is high school and its various classes and ranks of students. ***HYD***, however, is far more serious and artsy than ***Utena***, going more of the drama route compared to Utena's journeys into fantastical adventure. Everything about this series is very unique, very individual, helping it to stand apart from most other titles. Of course, you'll first probably notice the art style, which some will love (me, for example) while other will probably dislike. It's unusual, it's different, it's very shoujo, and it uses a specific mixture of dull and lower-key colors (a lot of



browns, for example) to craf look that I think is rather exqu ite. Next is the music ... craft as close to perfectly for the lo and style of ***HYD*** as I think it po sibly could be. The style — th is where I think ***HYD*** shows greatest strength. I've se countless anime (and movies, f that matter) that try to create artistic persona to themselve and more often than not th either don't work at all or a more annoying than meaningf Not the case here. Even simp scenes, a lonely shot of a window, a close up of Tsukushi deep thought, all are powerful and build an air of beau mixed with uncertainty. Finally, the storyline in itself, at simplest form, is one that almost all of us can relate to the cruelty of others. In ***HYD***, it's specifically the terrors trying to survive high school, and there are times when y almost take the place of Tsukushi because you can relate the situation that she finds herself in (more than once found myself begging her to just clock the heartless st dents that were trying their best to harass her). I've rea taken to ***Hana Yori Dango*** — it's one of those titles th shows the power that anime can hold if the creators sin ply try to go beyond the old and tired formulas (girls, gun demons, panties). If there is any justice in the world, SOM company here in the US will pick it up for an official Englis release. Anyone listening....? ***- shidoshi***



AF News Service

• Pioneer Gives Us the Moon

Hmm... and here I was thinking that I would be talking about ***Serial Experiments Lain*** as Pioneer's big title this month. Well, before we move on, about ***Lain*** — I'm going on record as predicting that this is going to be a big show, boy and girls. No doubt I'll be talking more out that one next issue, but for now — ***in*** volume 1, on both VHS and DVD, mes July 7th, volume 2 in August, vol-ne 3 in October, and volume 4 in ovember. I get both ***SE Lain*** and ***Soul liber DC*** in July ... sweeeet.

ow, on to the BIG news — Pioneer is inging us ***Sailor Moon***. ***Sailor Moon***, e movies. More specifically, ***Sailor oon R: the Movie***, ***Sailor Moon S: the Movie***, and ***ilor Moon Super S: the Movie***. The first release ll be ***Sailor Moon R***, which will be in August, and will be a "subtitled collector's edition" on VHS. s, you heard right, subtitled — the first time ***Sailor oon*** will be available subtitled in America. As ristmas draws closer, we'll see the release of the mewhat edited dubbed version (due to that lease being geared for a much younger market) d the DVD dual language version. After that, the her movies should come out in two to three onth intervals if everything goes okay. I've always penly been a ***Sailor Moon*** fan (a fact I feel I should e ashamed of for some reason), so the idea of ailor Moon + sub + DVD = one happy Shidoshi.

nally, ***Tenchi Muyo in Love! 2*** (aka ***Tenchi the ovie 3***) is currently set for release in Japan on ugust 24th (though that date could slip). The best art? The release will be as simultaneous as possi-e in America. The sound effects for the movie are eing done here in the US, and the dub is already eing completed, so we could end up getting it ere days after the Japanese fans do.

ADV Goes Insane

t a recent anime convention, ADV Films let loose a urry of new announcements which continues to how just how serious they are about the US anime arket. Not only do that have a long list of releas-s here, but the diversity of some of the titles is reat to see. Something rather staggering when ou look at this list of titles is that ADV will be run-ng 15 different TV series simultaneously by the iddle of next year. Good news, or overkill and ooding the market? You be the judge.

ow, many would argue my putting this one first, ut since I'm in charge and can do it, I'm going to. he title that stood out most for me on this list, and he one I'm jumping for joy over is ***Sakura Mail*** (aka ***akura Tsuushin***, aka ***Sakura Diaries***). This is a fun nd warm little romantic comedy which I got a total ck out of. I NEVER though I'd see this one hit the S, and was about to start petitioning companies to ive it a chance, but thankfully I need do none of that. long with ***Sakura Mail***, ADV will also be running titles we already know about — ***Bubblegum Crisis 2040*** (starting up in late August), ***Martian Successor Nadesico*** (starting up two months later), ***Nadia*** (starting up two months after Nadesico), ***Sorcerer Hunters***, ***Dirty Pair***, ***Those Who Hunt Elves***, and ***City Hunter***. Now, you throw in the newly announced titles — ***Gasaraki***, ***Princess Nine***, ***Generator Gawl***, and the new ***AD Police TV*** series (which, btw, ADV is co-producing).



Non-TV series wise, ADV will have ***Spriggan***, a huge title that they will actually be releasing theatrically here in the US next year. Along with that, we'll have the second half of ***Ninja Resurrection*** later this year, ***SIN*** (based off of the computer game), the next two ***Slayers*** movies, the second ***Slayers*** OAV series, the second series of ***Galaxy Fraulein Yuna***, ***Tatoon Master***, ***Variable Geo*** (based off of the all-girl fighting game), ***Compiler***, the Samurai, and the ***Master of Mosquiton*** series (the first volume of which we reviewed last issue). **[deep breath]** A lot, ne? Of course, me being the person that I am, I'd rather see ADV kick their DVD production into higher gear instead of release so many titles, but so long as they show some serious support behind DVD, I won't be complaining (especially since they're bringing me ***Sakura Tsuushin***).

• Magical Knight Notes

* The street date is not yet finalized, but it is tentatively set for either September 1999 or November 1999. After that, a new volume will be released every other month for the first season. The second season, which will indeed also be released by AnimeWorks, has no tentative release date as of yet.

* A sub version will be released along with a dub version, and probably the best news of all, both versions will retail for the exact same price. **[yippie!]**

* There will be five volumes for the first season, each with four episodes. The first two volumes will be released at the exact same time, to help get the series out quicker. When buying the first two volumes, you'll be able to either buy each individual tape for $24.95, or both together for $39.95. When the final volume is released, a box set will also be available, with all five volumes for $99.95.

* AnimeWorks would like to do a DVD release for ***Magical Knight Rayearth***, but nothing is known about the viability of such a release at this point. They did say, however, that if they do release ***MKR*** on DVD, it will only be released as a DVD boxset.

* If you're familiar at all with the history of ***MKR*** and the long saga of its voyage to the US, it was originally planned to be released on US television in a dub only format (from which the different character names, arguments over WD's translation of the Saturn game, and other such fun topics came about). For those who might be worried, the dub for the US pilot episode will NOT be used, and none of the character names will be changed for either the dub or sub.

* Three studios are being considered to do the dub — Coastal Recording Studio (***Earthian***, ***Shinesman***), Taj Productions (***Slayers***, ***Utena***), and Bang Zoom Productions (***Ninja Cadets***, ***Zero Woman***). The decision on the studio to be used should be made soon.

• Hisaishi Remixes Laputa

More news has come out about the Studio Ghibli/Disney deal, and this time it concerns the soundtrack to ***Laputa***. On his website, Jo Hisaishi (the composer of many of the soundtracks for Miyazaki's works) has been keeping an ongoing "diary" on what he has been doing as of late. In this diary, he has made some very interesting mentions about the upcoming US release of ***Laputa***. In order for ***Laputa***'s soundtrack to be brought up to speed with the quality of today's US movie theaters (***Laputa*** is an older movie, and isn't able to take of advantage of things like THX and Dolby Surround Sound), Mr. Hisaishi has been put in charge of re-recording its soundtrack.



Nothing wrong with that, right? Well, here is where some fans may begin to question what else they are doing. While re-recording the soundtrack, they (Mr. Hisaishi and Studio Ghibli) are also going to make changes to it so that it is "more suited" to the American audience. What this will mean is that some parts of the film will have music where the original Japanese version was silent (since US audiences "don't like silence"), and other parts of the soundtrack will be remixed with new arrangements. This was originally the idea of Disney, and they asked Studio Ghibli if this could be done if Jo Hisaishi was in total control of this change to the film (since in their agreement, Disney cannot make changed to any of Miyazaki's movies without Studio Ghibli's permission). And, be it good or bad, Studio Ghibli agreed to this.

Supposedly, Mr. Hisaishi has been spending a lot of time listening to US movie soundtracks to get a "feel" for what points US composers put into their music, and to try to express "America-ness" with the new version of the ***Laputa*** soundtrack without loosing the balance between the music and the movie. ***- shidoshi***

Hocus Pocus



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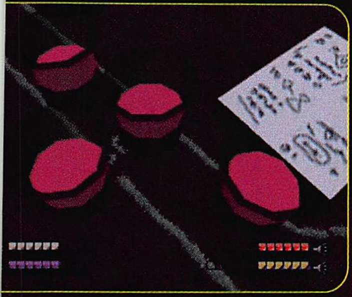
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Change Cars Into Objects
During gameplay, pause the game and press down, down, up, up, right, right, left, left. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a confirmation sound.

Behind Car View
During gameplay, pause the game and press left, ht, C-Left, C-Right, Left, Right, C-Left, and C-Right. If you tered the code correctly, you will hear a confirmation sound.

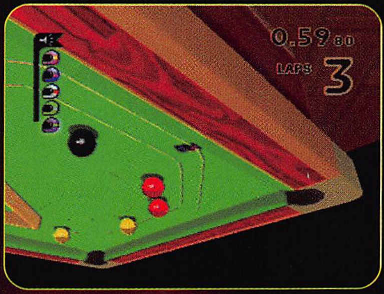
igh Bounces
use the game and press C-Left, right, right, down, up, down, t, down, and down. If you entered the code correctly, you will ar a confirmation sound.

ow CPU Racers



During gameplay, pause the game and press C-Right, C-Up, C-Left, C-Down, C-Right, C-Up, C-Left, and C-Down. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a confirmation sound

Turbo Mode
During gameplay, pause the game and press C-Left, C-Down, C-Right, C-Left, C-Up, C-Down, C-Down, C-Down, and C-Down. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a confirmation sound.



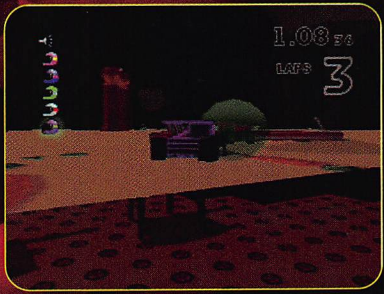
Debug Mode
During gameplay, pause the game and press C-Left, up, down, down, C-Left, C-Right, C-Right, C-Up, and C-Down. Then enter the following commands for their respective effects:

Instant Win
If you're getting tired of gettin lapped over and over again, here's the solutions! While playing the game, press Z + C-Down.

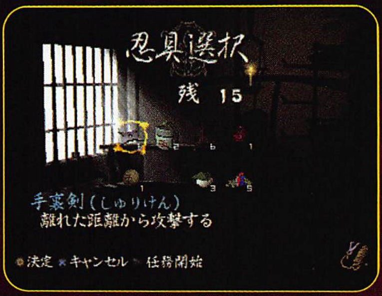
Destroy All Cars
If you're getting pissed at getting mauled on the track, fight back! While playing the game, hold X + C-Up + C-Right + C-Left.

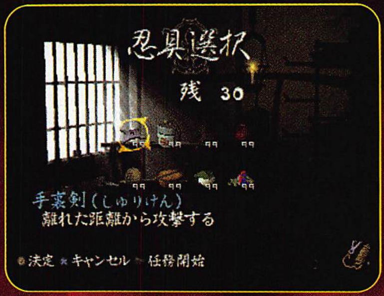
Change Camera Angle
Feeling like being a director? While playing the game, hold Z and press up, down, left or right.

Zoom Camera View
While playing the game, hold Z and press L Shift or R Shift.



Tenchu: Shinobi Gaisen
Item Codes







Get 30 storage slots
At item selection screen, hold t, press L1, R1, Up, Right, Down, Left

Increase item stocks
At the item selection screen, hold Triangle and press L1, R1, Up, Down, Right, Left.

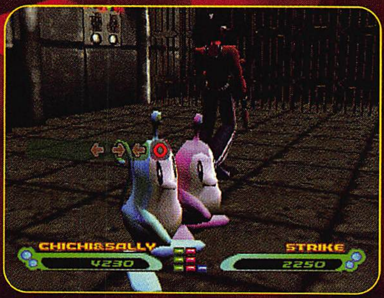
Maximum power
Pause the game when having less than full power. Then, press L R1, Right, Down, Left, Up.

Bonus level
Beat the game with Rikimaru. Then the 2030 A.D. level will appe under the time attack option.

Bust-A-Move 2
Extra Characters, Hidden Stage







Robo-Z Gold
Finish the game in Mix Mode and dance off against Pander (which you need to get a "Fever Time" on every stage).

Chi Chi and Sally
To get the duel-dancing tongue-wagglers, finish the game with Capoeira.

Dance off against Pander
To dance off with Pander, you have to get a "Fever Time" on eve stage. Then, after you beat Robo-Z Gold, you will dance off to th difficult beat of Pander's Stage.

Columbo
To get the groovin' gerbil, finish the game with Shorty.

Devil's Crush
Infinite Balls, View Ending

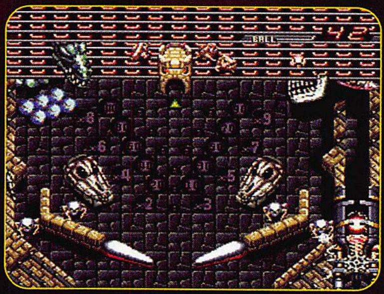


Unlimited Balls
For unlimited balls, enter the password "AAAAAA-HAAA." Now when you start a game, you should see your ball indicator at zero. You'll have an unlimited amount of pinballs.

View Ending
Enter the password "THECRUSHEL." When you start the game, you'll have the maximum amount of points. Just score one more point, and you'll see the ending.








ameShark Codes
arious Systems

Ehrgeiz — PSX

ayer 1 Infinite Health
8011EADE 00B8

ayer 2 Infinite Health
801228F2 00B8

Infinite Time
800F6C94 0930

nable All Characters
801F19FC FFFF
801F19FE FFFF

ayer 1 Max Power Bar
8011F7D6 00D0

ayer 2 Max Power Bar
801235EA 00D0

Infinite Health in RPG mode
801E84D0 0080

Infinite Power Bar in RPG mode
801F363E 0080

ust-A-Move 2: Dance Tengoku Mix

aster Joker Command (press Triangle and Select to use codes)
D005E870 0101

Enable Robo-Z Gold
3004E2F0 0001

Enable Columbo
3004E2F1 0001

Enable Sushi Boy
3004E2F2 0001

nable ChiChi + Sally
3004E2F3 0001

Enable Michael Doi
3004E2F4 0001

Enable McLoad
3004E2F5 0001

Enable Hustle Kong
3004E2F6 0001

Enable Pander
3004E2EF 0001

Nightmare Creatures N64

Infinite lives
800A4B53 0009

Gun
810A4BC6 0009

Super Healing
810A4BC0 0009

Multi Gun
810A4BBC 0009

Fire Bombs
810A4BBA 0009

Dynamite
810A4BB6 0009

Spider Cards
810A4BAE 0009

Star Wars: Rogue Squadron – N64

Infinite Lives
80130B10 0008

Infinite Secondary Weapons
8010CA32 0008

99 Kills Have All Levels / Ships
80130B4D 007E

Infinite Health
81137E7C 4316

Centipede – PSX

Player One Infinite Lives
80095D7C 0002

Player Two Infinite Lives
80095D80 0002

Guardian's Crusade PSX

Max Rubies
801B5518 967F
801B551A 0098

Have All Living Toys
801B551A FFFF
801B551C FFFF
801B551E FFFF
801B5520 FFFF
801B5522 FFFF
801B5524 FFFF

Kensei: Sacred Fist PSX

Infinite Health P1
800C4D70 0090
800CE25C 00C0

Extra Characters
80010588 FFFF
8001058A 003F

Grip of Death
800CF622 1000

Knockout Kings PSX

Infinite Stamina
801DA5DE 002D
801DA606 002D

No Stamina
801DA5DE 0000
801DA606 0000

Max Power
801DA60C 0BB2

Point Blank 2 - PSX

Point Blank Castle Mode Codes
P1 Infinite Lives
800BD4E8 0003

P2 Infinite Lives
800BD4EA 0009

Theme Park Mode Codes
Infinite Lives
800A8D48 0009

Super Bullet Train-Max Targets Hit
D00B30BC 0000
800B30BC 0FFF

Cosmic Drive-Max Targets Hit
D00B3248 0000
800B3248 0063

Abyss Tours-Max Targets Hit
D00A8F12 0000
800A8F12 0063

Haunted House-Infinite Time
800B263C 012C

R-Types

R-Type 1
Have Missiles
301355C1 0001

Infinite Lives P1
80138520 0003

Max Force Sidekick P1
301355CA 0003

Weapon Power Up
801355C8 8000

Invincible
801385B4 0001

R-Type 2
Have Missiles
300F8445 0001

Infinite Lives
300FBC4B 0003

Max Force Sidekick
300F844E 0003

Weapon Power Up
800F8452 010C

Invincible
300FBCEE 0001

Tomb Raider PSX

Thames Warf
Infinite Health
801E1FE2 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801E1FE0 FFC0

Aldwych
Infinite Health
801D6A12 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801D6A10 FFC0

Lud's Gate
Infinite Health
801E26D6 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801E26D4 FFC0

The City
Infinite Health
801927C2 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801927C0 FFC0

Antarctica
Infinite Health
801D9866 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801D9864 FFC0

RX-Tech Mines
Infinite Health
801DCBA2 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801DCBA0 FFC0

Lost City Of Tinnos
Infinite Health
801D8A32 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801D8A30 FFC0

Meteorite Cavern
Infinite Health
801A5BDA 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801A5BD8 FFC0

Jungle
Infinite Health
801D301A 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801D3018 FFC0

Temple Ruins
Infinite Health
801DB4D6 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801DB4D4 FFC0

River Ganges
Infinite Health
801D3C8A 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801D3C88 FFC0

Caves Of Kaliya
Infinite Health
8017B7AE 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
8017B7AC FFC0

Coastal Village
Infinite Health
801D6E9E 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801D6E9C FFC0

Crash Site
Infinite Health
801DC7DE 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801DC7DC FFC0

Madubu Gorge
Infinite Health
801DABFA 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801DABF8 FFC0

Temple Of Puna
Infinite Health
8018E152 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
8018E150 FFC0

Nevada Desert
Infinite Health
801D65F6 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801D65F4 FFC0

High Security Compound
Infinite Health
801DF996 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801DF994 FFC0

Area 51
Infinite Health
801DF6C2 03E8
Moon Jump
D0095EE4 8000
801DF6C0 FFC0

Infinite Oxygen
8009914E 0708

Infinite Shotgun Ammo
80099210 967F
80099212 0098

Infinite Desert Eagle Ammo
80099208 967F
8009920A 0098

Infinite Uzi Ammo
8009920C 967F
8009920E 0098

HOCUS POCUS• HOCUS POCUS• HOCUS POCUS• HOCUS POCUS• HOCUS POCUS• HOCUS PO

GameShark Codes
Continued

Bomberman Fantasy Race PSX

Infinite Money
8014873C FFFF
Infinite Stamina
800100EA 077F

Omega Boost PSX Import

Enable Codes
D0120876 1040
80120876 1000
Infinite Time
80146BBC 1770
Infinite Power Boost
800A34B4 1000
Infinite Energy
800A34A8 03E8
800A34AC 03E8
Infinite Continues
D0053F3A FFFF
80053F3A 0000
No Damage
D002ED42 0050
8002ED42 0040
Stage 1 - 1
D012B01A AE63
8012B01A AE60
Stage 1 - 2
D0125786 AE43
80125786 AE40
Stage 2 - 1
D0126146 AEA3
80126146 AEA0
Stage 2 - 2
D0129A2E AE42
80129A2E AE40
Stage 3 - 1
D012627A AE43
8012627A AE40
Stage 3 - 2
D012D01A AE63
8012D01A AE60
Stage 4 - 1
D0129846 AE43
80129846 AE40
Stage 4 - 2
D012B4CE AE42
8012B4CE AE40
Stage 4 - 3
D0133626 AE62
80133626 AE60

Saga Frontier 2 PSX Import

Enable Codes
D00DC7D6 1040
800DC7D6 1000

Jobs Points Max
800103D4 FFFF

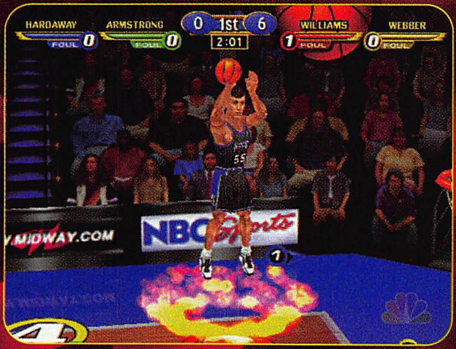
Unlimited JP
D01C9C22 2405
801C9C20 0000

CR Max
80010638 423F
8001063A 000F

NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC
Tips From Air Dango

While *NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC* plays similar to *NBA Jam*, there are a few new features in the game that can both benefit you and/or get you beaten badly. So here are a few tips and tricks which, while they won't turn you into Jordan overnight, will certainly make you advance to the next level of the game.

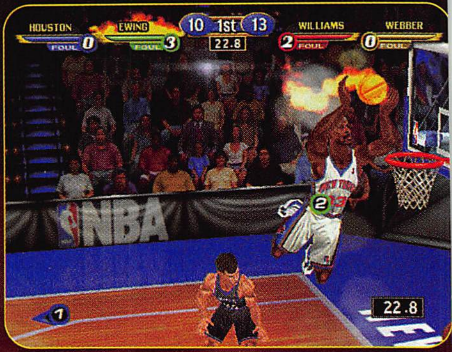
Offense



Hot Spots:
Every player in *NBA Showtime* has a hot spot on somewhere near the three point perimeter. You'll know that you've hit your hot spot when you hear an explosion as you shoot the three. Get two shots in the same hot spot, and the rest of your shots will be followed with flaming special effects. While shooting in the hot spot doesn't guarantee a three pointer, it dramatically increases your chances of getting a shot in.



Getting On Fire:
Just like *NBA Jam*, when a player scores three buckets in a row he goes on FIRE! Being on fire gives you unlimited Turbo, and nearly every shot you attempt on the court has an extremely high chance





of swishing in. Being On Fire als enables you to block any shot at ar time (i.e. legal goal tending) and allow you unlimited fouls! Be aware thoug that once the opposition scores, you lose your fiery nature.



Team Fire:
If you thought being On Fire meant trou ble, there's also Team Fire. To get o Team Fire, your team has to get thre alley-oops (play where the pass goe straight to an airborne dunker who slam it home) or three double dunks (pla where a player goes up for a dunk an





...sses to his airborne teammate to ...unk it home). Once done, BOTH ...ayers will be On Fire, and have all ...e abilites of being On Fire! And ...at's where the troubles begin for ...our opponent, cuz to extinguish ...am Fire, the opposing team has to ...ore an alley-oop or double dunk of ...eir own.

...efense
...nacious "D" is the key to winning ...ames in *NBA Showtime* and, while ...s impossible to entirely shut down ...our opponent's offense, here's a few ...s off dango's glove.

...ealing and shoving:
...hile the former *NBA Jam*-like games ...lowed you to shove all you want, ...on't get carried away in *NBA ...howtime*. While you can get away ...ith a shove once in awhile, shove a ...all carrier too hard and you might ...et a whistle indicating a foul. Get ...e fouls, and the other team gets a ...ee Throw worth 3 points **and** pos...ession of the ball if they make the ...ee Throw.



...learing out and rebounding:
...hile shoving seems to be useful ...nly against the ball carrier, try to ...eep shoving the opposing player ...ithout the ball since you can't get ...alled for a foul against someone ...ithout the ball. Roughing up the ...ther player will dramatically effect ...is performance as he'll get injured. ...hoving the rival teammates is a ...ood way to clear them out when you ...y to get the rebound. Basically, if a ...hot doesn't swish in, clear the other team out from under the basket and get the board.

Blocking:
There's nothing more devastating and disheartening for the rival team than when you get a monstrous block on them. The key to blocking is good timing and the block ability of your players. Don't block a shot by jumping up with an opponent at the same time, unless there's a huge height difference in your favor. Time a block by jumping right when a rival baller releases a shot. Also, remember that you can "legally" goaltend when On Fire. So when you're On Fire, it's best to stay close to the basket.



CODE BLOWOUT!
NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC
Versus Screen Codes
Each of the following codes are entered at the Versus screen. Icons appear at the bottom of the Versus screen, and by pressing the following button and joystick commands, you can unlock secret modes! The Turbo button cycles through the first icon, the Shoot button cycles the second icon, and the Pass button cycles for the third icon. There are six icons: the letters "A", B", "C", and "N", the Midway logo, and a basketball icon. The following is a list of Versus Screen codes, and more are coming soon!

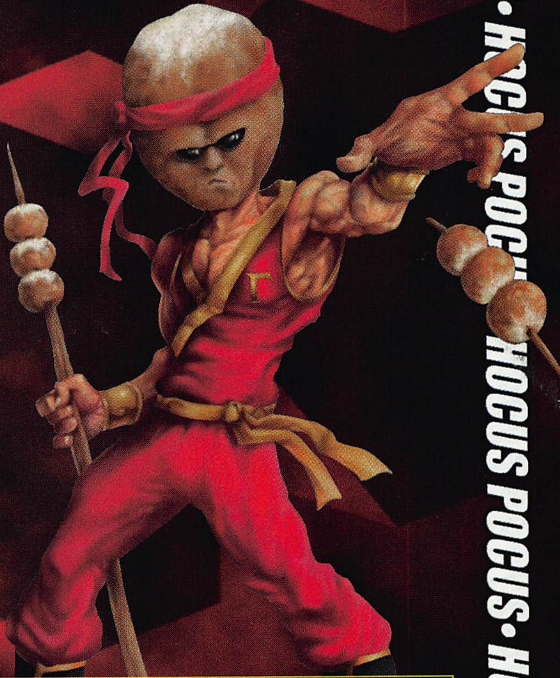
ABA Ball: ABA, then right
Tournament Mode: basketball, basketball, basketball, then down
Big Head: A, Midway logo, Midway logo, then right
Fog on (outdoor courts only): basketball, A, B then up
Create Snow (outdoor courts only): basketball, A, basketball, then left
Create Rain (Outdoor Courts only): basketball, C, basketball, then left
Show Shot %: Midway logo, Midway logo, basketball, then down
Show Hot Spot: basketball, Midway logo, Midway logo, then down

Play as the NBA Mascots
To play as the NBA Mascots, start a game, and go to the "Enter Initials" screen. Then enter the following as your Initials, then your pin number:

HAWK 0322 - Atlanta Hawks
BENNY 0503 - Chicago Bulls
HORNET 1105 - Charlotte Hornets
ROCKY 0201 - Denver Nuggets
TURBO 1111 - Houston Rockets
BOOMER 0604 - Indiana Pacers
CRUNCH 0503 - Minnesota Timberwolves

Extra hidden characters:
Enter the following name and pin number to enable the hidden characters:

KERRI 0220 - Kerri the Female Player
KERRI 1111 - Kerri in Alternate Uniform
LIA 0712 - Lia the Female Player
LIA 1111 - Lia in Alternate Uniform
PINTO 1966 - Pinto Horse
RETRO 1970 - Retro Rob
HORSE 1966 - White Horse





Marvel vs. Capcom
Combo Special Part Deux!

Not impressed with last month's combo carnage? Well then, feast your eyes upon the next four pages filled with some of the best combos in *Marvel vs. Capcom*. All the following combos are ranked by a complex equation that is based on these measurements:

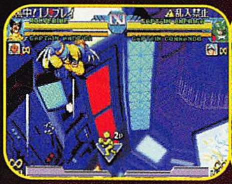
Difficulty: How hard it is to perform the combination
Damage: Amount of damage the combo inflicts
Hits: Number of hits the combo strings together
Style Points: Who cares about those, as long as you look good doing it?

A couple of things you readers should know before you start your combination quest. Not all the combos will work against every character, since size does matter. The height, width, and weight of your target are important factors you'll have to consider when engaging a foe. Also, many of the combos will work in specific places like in the corner or when your character is in the corner. With that said, here are GameFan's Top Ten *Marvel vs. Capcom* combos!

10 Wolverine's Diving Basics

Wolverine's Diving Kick (Jump, down + Forward) isn't that useful unless you perform it from a Super Jump. When you perform it from a Super Jump, you can combo into a ground combo. Starting the combo with a Diving kick can catch opponents off guard, especially if it connects on the back of the opponent.

Warm
Jin's COMBO RATING


First, Super Jump and keep an eye on target icon.


Perform Wolvie's Diving Kick, hitting the target's head.



As you descend, chain a Roundhouse kick before landing.



Dash and perform a Standing Jab punch.



Next, chain a Standing Short Kick.



Chain a Standing Roundhouse to launch the foe up



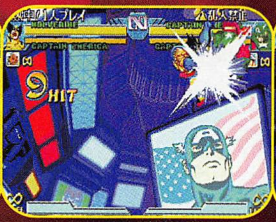
Meet the victim in the air with a Super Jumping Jab punch.



Chain a Short kick to keep the opponent in the air.



Continue the frenzy with a Strong punch.



Perform a Forward kick and before the target can recover...



Slash the target down with a Fierce punch.

9 Chun Li's Super Kick Combo

This is a good intermediate combo that all Chun Li players should know. The key is getting both Jumping Roundhouse kicks to connect before landing. You might want to modify the combo if the target isn't in the corner.

Hot!
Jin's COMBO RATING


Perform Chun Li's Stab Kick (jump, down + Forward kick)



Chain Chun Li's Roundhouse kick (hits twice).



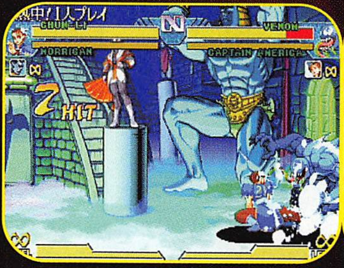
Land, and dash in with a Standing Jab punch.



Continue the combo by chaining a Standing Short kick.



Next, execute a Crouching Strong punch.



Now chain a Crouching Forward kick to the combo.



Now, connect a Crouching Fierce punch.



Before the enemy can recover, 2-in-1 into Chun Li's Senretsu Kyaku.



If timed correctly, you should get 17+ hits.

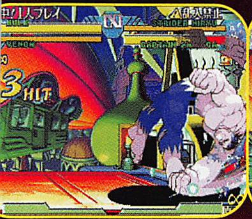
8 Hulk's "Hurt Me More!" Combo

Scorching!!! Jin's COMBO RATING

Hulk isn't known for great numbers of hits in a combo, but, since one hit is extremely damaging, stringing his most damaging moves together for a simple seven-hitter will take off half a lifebar! This combo is only done in the corner, and the Gamma Crush might not hit smaller opponents. Otherwise, the opposition should fear this combo.

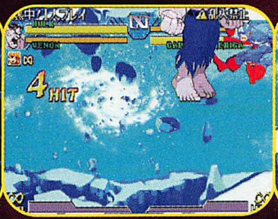

Land a Jumping Roundhouse kick low on a target.


Land a perform a Standing Jab punch.


Bash the foe down with a Standing Fierce punch.


The Fierce punch will send the target in the air.


2-in-1 the Gamma Crush before the foe can recover.


If your timing's right, you'll hit the foe while going up...


And when you come down for some major damage!

7 Jin's Double Trouble Combo

Scorching!!! Jin's COMBO RATING

Probably the worst combo character, Jin does have one very unique combo that ties two supers together. The timing for the hit between the two supers is extremely late, and it'll take hours of practice to perfect. Working best when Jin is in the corner, you'll need a Level 2 Super Meter.


First, connect with Jin's Saotome Cyclone Super, sending the foe up...


And the foe will come back down. Now before he can recover...


Hit the target off the ground with a Crouching Strong. Then...


2-in-1 into the Jin's Bloodia Punch for some heavy damage.

6 Ryu's "Kickin'" Combo

Hot! Jin's COMBO RATING

This combo for Ryu isn't very hard, though the hit after the Super may take some practice to time. This combo does awesome damage, so it's a good one to keep in your memory. Obviously, you'll need a Level 2 Super Meter: one to change into Ken form, the other for the Super. Oh, and this only works in the corner.


First, change into Ken form (half circle back + Strong punch)


Now, connect a Jumping Forward kick high to the head


Before landing, add a Fierce punch into the mix.


Dash, and execute a Standing Jab punch.


Next, chain a Standing Fierce punch before...


...you 2-in-1 into the Shippujinrai Kyaku Super.


The Super will send the target into the air for a total of 18 hits.


Before your victim can get up, land and connect a Standing Short kick.


Finally, smack the knocked-up foe with a Standing Fierce punch.

5 Captain America's "Serious Hangtime" Combo

Captain America has always had a diverse array of combination ability in all his fighting games, and Marvel vs. Capcom is no exception. The hardest part of this combo is timing the three Jabs in the air to keep the combo going. Otherwise, a great combo to know since you can do it anywhere onscreen.

Hot! Jin's COMBO RATING



Jump, and aim a Forward Kick to the victim's head.



Before landing, chain a Roundhouse kick.



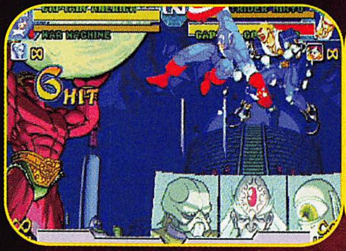
Dash, and smack the lackey with a Standing Jab Punch.



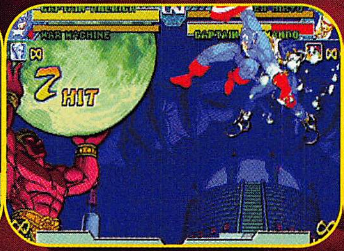
Slam the turkey with a Standing Strong punch.



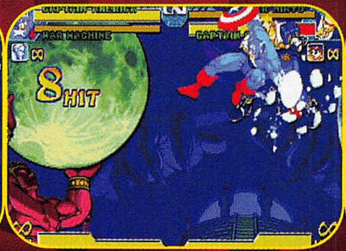
Send them afloat with a Crouching Fierce punch.



Now, meet aerial target with a Jab punch.



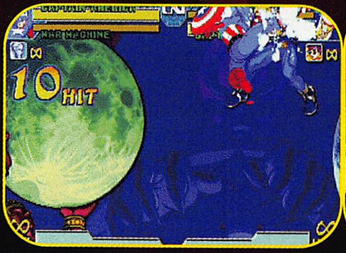
Nail the opponent again with another Jab punch.



Peform another Jab punch and before you start falling back to Earth.



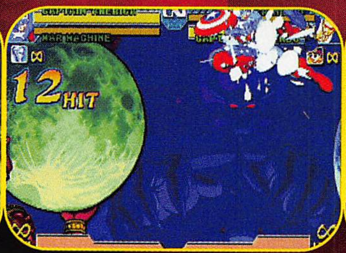
Double jump and connect another Jab punch.



Add a Short kick sending your target a bit off the screen.



Slap the "unseen" victim with a Strong punch.



Pummel the opponent with a Forward kick.



Finally, eradicate the air-born pigeon with a Fierce punch.

4 Captain Commando's FireShock Combo

Captain Commando's combo ability is slightly better than Captain America's, mostly due to Captain Commando's better selection of Special and Super moves to combo with. This combo only works in the corner, and requires a Level 1 Super Meter.

Scorching!!! Jin's COMBO RATING



Aim a Jumping Strong punch to the head of the victim.



Before landing, add a shocking Fierce punch.



Dash and connect with a Standing Jab punch.



Then, add a Standing Short kick.



Swing in with a Standing Strong punch.



Now, send them skyward with a Standing Roundhouse kick.



Before the target gets too high, immediately 2-in-1 into the Captain Sword.



As the target lands, hit them off the ground with a Crouching Short kick.

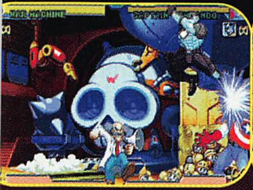


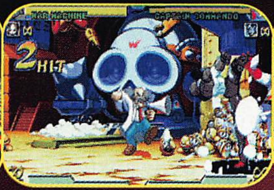
Finally, add a fiery Standing Fierce punch.

3 War Machine's "Jumpjet Option" Combo

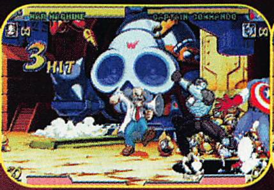
While War Machine's combo prowess is average, his aerial combo ability is very good due to his ability to thrust up into the air. Due to the lack of space, I couldn't fit the next five hits at the end of this combo, so I'll just tell you: Jab punch, Short kick, Strong punch, Thrust up (all punches), Jab punch, Jab Solar Cannon.

Warm — Jin's COMBO RATING

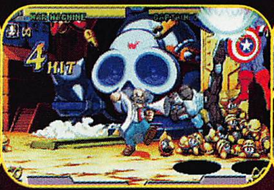

Jump and execute a Short kick to a cornered target.



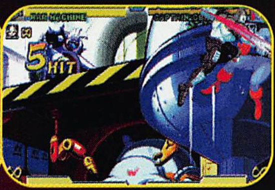
Right before landing, add a Roundhouse kick.



Dash, and connect a Standing Short kick.



Send the opponent up with a Standing Roundhouse kick.



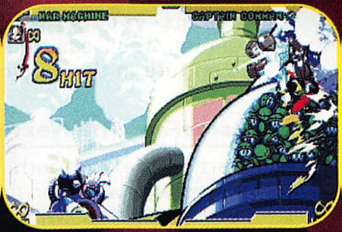
Jump, and meet the target with Jab punch.



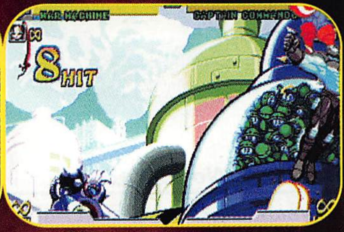
Keep the target in the air with a Short kick.



Blast the target with a Strong punch.



Now, hit the target with a Roundhouse kick aimed up (press up on D-pad).



Now, thrust up (up +All punches) and add the hits noted above. Sorry!

2 Ryu's "Almost Impossible Air Fireball" Combo

While the damage and hits aren't extremely high for this combo, the level of difficulty is. The key is the 2-in-1 from the Standing Fierce punch into the Air Fireball Super. Do this by peforming a Sagat Tiger Knee Motion (from SF 2 HyperFighting) for the Air Fireball. Time the Air Fireball so it's not too low to the ground.

Hot! — Jin's COMBO RATING


Jump in with a Forward kick to the noggin.


Again, before landing, slug the foe with a Fierce punch.



Dash in and connect with a Standing Jab punch.



Add a jaw-breaking, Standing Fierce punch.



Now, 2-in-1 into the Tenma Gou Zanku. Hard, but very cool.

1 Strider's "Damage Control" Combo

Scorching!!! — Jin's COMBO RATING

This is the mother of all combos. Rarely will you be able to get the perfect conditions for this combo. You'll need a Helper that doesn't knock the target down, a Level 2 Super Meter, and the victim has to be in the corner. The best Helper to use is Unknown Soldier even though you can only call him out 3 times. High damage and LOTS O' HITS!!!


First, call the Helper out while the target is in the corner.



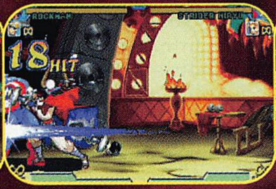
As soon as you can, perform the Ouroboros Super.



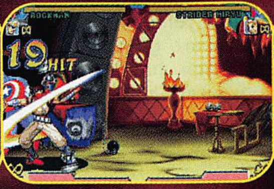
While the Super is hitting, connect a Standing Jab punch.



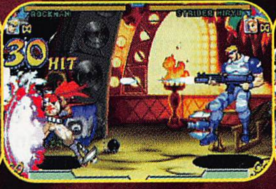
Add a Standing Short kick with the Super still hitting.



Next, connect with a Standing Strong punch.



Continue with a Standing Forward Kick.



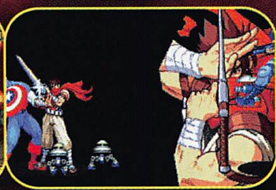
Quickly call your Helper out for additional hits.

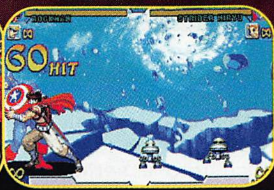


Repeat the combo again (Jab, Short, Strong, Forward).

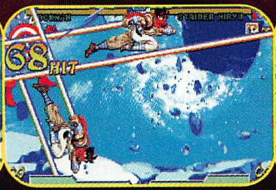


Call the Helper out as you Super begins to stop.

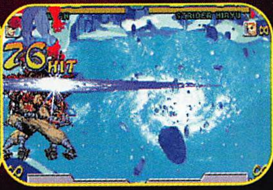

Before the Super stops, execute the Ragnarok Super.



If you've got skillz in timing, the Ragnorok will connect.



The Ragnorak Super will add a ton of hits. It also hurts a lot.



This is an unnecessary shot... but it just looks cool.

Geist Force No More?

Yeah, yeah, we know, last month's Other Stuff ran with the same initial headline, but this time it's more dire news. *Geist Force* is indeed dead, no more, kaput. Seems that Bernie Stolar, COO of Sega of America decided the game simply wasn't living up to its AAA billing and was summarily axed. While this wasn't the first game to meet such a fate, it was the first to actually make ECM curl up into a ball and have himself a good cry.

To Modem Or Not To Modem?

Ok, so this is also the second headline from last month's OS, but this time we have confirmation that the modem is indeed a 'go' for a US and European pack-in at 56k. Not too shabby, Sega, you even almost made ECM forget about the whole *Geist Force* issue (<sob>).

Flipper and Nintendo Get Together

Just prior to E3, Nintendo joined the next, next-generation club with the announcement of their new Dolphin hardware. Featuring a custom 400 mHz IBM Power PC CPU, a custom graphics chip by Art X (a team made up of former SGI engineers that worked on the N64's graphics engine) which is to be manufactured by NEC of all companies (wonder where that puts Sega and Power VR2?). Most exciting of all is the fact that the system will employ DVD as its storage medium and that it will play DVD movies right out of the box, something that PSY has yet to announce. While the machine, at heart, is only a hair more powerful than PSY (on white sheets, of course), with the full power of Nintendo's in-house teams working on *Mario*, *Zelda*, and *Metroid* follow-ups as well as Rare having already begun work on a *Mickey Mouse* game for the platform, the software would already appear to be well in hand.

Zelda: The Quick Return of Link

While we mentioned some time back that *Zelda: OOT* might be receiving an update of sorts in a *Sonic & Knuckles*-inspired lock-on cart, the latest from deep inside the Nintendo camp is that they're now talking full-blown sequel. Now I'm as skeptical as the rest of you about this news, but it comes from a reliable source. Word has it 4-Meg Expansion Pak support is the order of the day running under a slightly modified *OOT* engine. While this doesn't deep-six the lock-on idea totally (Nintendo is keen to not confuse its younger consumer base, it seems), rest assured there's a new adventure in the pipeline.

GameFan: The Next Generation

Starting next month, GameFan welcomes a new editor to the ranks of its illustrious staff with Cerberus, a.k.a. Tyrone Rodriguez of Tips n' Tricks fame. Known for his remarkably crunchy blue hair, charming demeanor and his unfathomable love for all things Orange County in nature we welcome you, Tyrone... a month early!

64DD Coming Out! (No, I really don't think so!)

As you may have noted this is a modification of the 6th headline from last month's OS. Only this time, the 64DD can dream another dream, this dream is over. With the recent announcement of Nintendo's Dolphin hardware, the DD has officially been given its walking papers according to a source inside Nintendo. While it may make a few more appearances at various and sundry trade shows throughout the Land of the Rising Sun as it has in the past, bid it a fond farewell as it goes silently into the deep, dark night. Alas, poor DD, we barely knew ye. Say 'hi' to *Geist Force* for us.

Saturn Dies...Again

While it was mentioned some time ago that Majesco (the company responsible for the ultra-cool, ultra-cheap Genesis 3) was planning on releasing a revamped Saturn with software going for as a little as $14.99, word now has it that the company may have scrapped those plans altogether. Unfortunately, as of press-time we couldn't get ahold of somebody to verify this, but we're as upset as the other five Saturn fans out there.

Dragon Quest: Search for a Solid Release Date

Yep, here we go again: *DQVII*, the latest in the venerable, second only to *Final Fantasy*, RPG series, has been delayed, again. The new release date is March 2000, forcing the GameFan staff to launch into a series of lame jokes about the game being delayed to the next millennium (hey, it was a slow week). Here's to hoping this is the last time *DQ* is delayed.

Neo Geo Pocket Color Available Now!!!

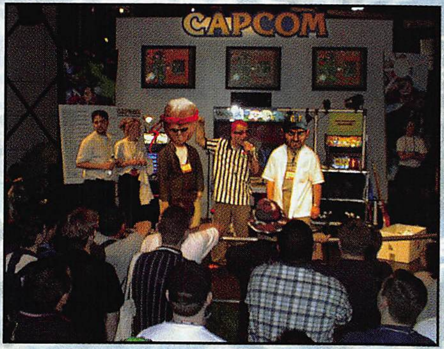
The greatest thing to happen to portable gaming since the Game & Watch, SNK's NGP Color is now available via their web site at www.snkusa.com. The staff at GameFan strongly suggests you order one now for the paltry sum of $69.95 and pick up *Metal Slug First Mission*, *Crush Roller*, and *Samurai Shodown 2* with it. Now you can start saving some cash for Dreamcast.

SNK vs. Capcom: Round Three

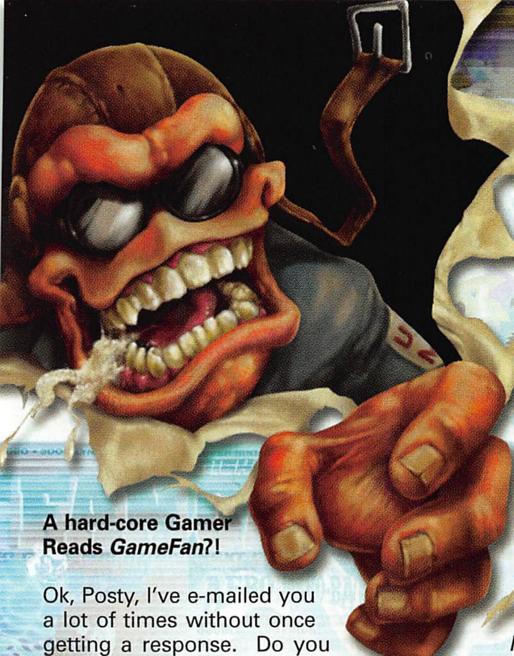
The latest word on *King of Fighters vs. Capcom Heroes* places the current hardware platform as either CPS-2 or Hyper Neo Geo (here's to praying it's the latter) after Capcom's little tiff with Sega. Currently, plans call for the game to play much like arcade champ, *Street Fighter Alpha 3*. No word yet as to whether it will be Team Battle or one-on-one combat.

GameFan Bludgeons All Comers

At the recent E3 show in Los Angeles, GameFan was given yet another chance to prove that there isn't a better group of pro gamers in the country when they battled all comers to a first and second place finish in Capcom's *Powerstone* Press Tourney. Amidst a field of competitors hailing from the likes of EGM, Tips 'N Tricks, Game



Informer and Next Generation (among others) ECM and Dangohead went toe-to-toe and summarily mopped the floor with little opposition. To quote the mighty Zangief: "Bolischoy Tavieda" (still not sure what that means, but we're pretty sure it has something to do with busting ass). It then came down to ECM vs. Dango for one of the coolest prizes ever handed out: a mini-*Marvel Vs. Capcom* cabinet. While they traded blows across a full, tense 3 rounds, ECM emerged victorious and, in addition to claiming the prize, was finally able to put the whole *Geist Force* thing behind him... for fifteen minutes.



THE POSTMEISTER!

Write to me, I'm running for president!!!
The Postmeister
6301 DeSoto Avenue Suite E
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

A hard-core Gamer Reads *GameFan*?!

Ok, Posty, I've e-mailed you a lot of times without once getting a response. Do you not answer questions from hard-core gamers anymore? Well, here are my questions:

1) I heard that the next *Metal Gear* is in production, please tell me for what system (regardless of all the criticisms, it was one of gaming's greatest moments).

2) Samus, where is she, is she N64 bound?

Please answer these two simple questions from a real gamer.

Tony
Via the Internet

Those who know me best are fully aware that the crazy, one-armed pickle man is all about the hard-core gamers. Legions of Post-Fu students prostrate themselves before me on a daily basis, in hopes of scaling the glorious mountains of gaming knowledge upon whose peaks only my eyes have gazed. It is only with great humility that I accept their gifts of various frozen goods, Twinkies, and Waffle Chips, because I know that these gifts are nothing more than a token of my fans' selflessness in the pursuit of video gaming's most guarded secrets. Though you have come before me offering nothing but an empty vessel waiting to be filled with my vast knowledge, I will have compassion for you as a "real gamer" and bless you with the info you seek. Next time, bring some grub...

1) Right now, the "talk" is about Konami's Metal Gear Solid Integral*, which gives PlayStation gamers the opportunity to sharpen their already razor-like skills in a wide range of new training missions. Several new features have been added to the regular game as well, such as the ability to play as the Cyber Ninja... it's not really a new game, but for a gamer of your taste and discrimination it might just be the ticket... My spies tell me Hideo Kojima is also working on a Dreamcast title, but Konami's keeping it hush-hush; there's a chance it could be a new* Metal Gear *as well.*

2) Even though rumors have been running rampant that Miyamoto-san was working on a new Metroid *for the Nintendo 64, I had one of my super-agents (a man highly skilled in the Postal art of information extraction, known to Post-Fu experts as "The Art of the Ten Minute Chit-Chat") go right to the source... and the results will not please you, I'm afraid. Nintendo's favorite son shot down the idea of a new* Metroid *on N64, saying the rumors were completely unfounded, and that no new* Metroid *is in the works for Nintendo 64. However, there's always Nintendo's upcoming Dolphin system...*

Only now can you call yourself a "real gamer," as you have scaled the merciless peaks and sipped from the overflowing cup of Postal wisdom... don't let the door of my cavernous sanctum hit you on the way out, junior.

Posty Finds The Missing Link...

Dear Cave Dweller:

I have a question to ask you (don't we all?) concerning the PS2. I have two PlayStations with the link cable. I heard that all the peripherals for the PS would work on the new system. If that's the case, then I can sell one system and buy a PS2. Maybe it won't even matter because the link cable is nonexistent. Instead of the link cable, they should call it the "missing" link cable. One more thing please, can you imagine a *Twisted Metal* for the Internet feature on the PS2?

Ambiorix Santos
Providence, R.I.

Indeed, everyone has something to ask of me. If it's not beautiful women inquiring about what kind of skin care regimen I adhere to in order to maintain a pale, healthy glow (without knowing of my swank underground living conditions), it's all the massive weightlifters at the local gym begging for my training secrets so that they, too, can achieve my high level of raw physical perfection. Then, of course, there's a game-playing public who knows of no other man who can satisfy their uncontrollable craving for gaming info... that's you. You are truly hard-core if the link cable is your friend... very few PlayStation owners use, know of, or take advantage of this primitive form of networked gaming. Unfortunately, there are probably just as few PSX games in existence which make use of it. Though Sony does plan to include a networked gaming element in the PlayStation 2, it's going to be very different from the "link cable" version you know and love. There is no word yet on whether or not you'll even be able to link a PlayStation with its successor, but my money is riding on a little horse named "Not A Chance, Freak."

To answer your final question, yes, I can... but then my mind starts drifting to thoughts of rolling fields and scantily-clad maidens chanting my name... it's a pretty frequent problem.

Has Konami Forgotten 2D Gamers?

Hiya Posty! I've been an avid game player since the Atari days and was just wonderin' if you could answer a teeny-weeny little question for me... Could you PLEASE tell me what has happened to Konami? Strike 1... No *Snatcher* update, Strike 2... No *Policenauts*, Strike 3... *Castlevania* and *Contra* in 3D, NOOOOO! Do they ever plan to do any of these games justice? As a 2D purist, I for one don't want to see it go the way of the dinosaur, but apparently my humble opinion doesn't matter to the big game publishers. Polygons work for racing games, fighters, and shooters, but leave my RPGs and side-scrollers (*Contra*) alone!!!

I hope you have some good news for all us 2D purists out there Posty! BTW, any chance of seeing a *Guardian Heroes* sequel on DC? What about Working Designs, did they just give up on Saturn, or are they totally Sony now?

Here's a bag o' Waffle Chips! Enjoy!

Steve Becker
Via the Internet

Ahhh... Finally, a Posty-fan who knows how to present his question in style. I thought I was gonna starve to death, you are definitely my hook-up. I feel your pain, too... Konami has left fans of 2D games standing around, scratching our heads and wondering what went wrong. Part of the problem started a long, long time ago when Konami experienced a mass exodus of talent, most of whom ended up starting

a company we all know as Treasure. When that happened, Konami's in-house development was hurtin', so they started farming games out to other developers (Appaloosa) who proceeded, in short order, to kill them.

That's not to say that Konami isn't still capable of greatness... a couple games by the name of Castlevania: Symphony of the Night *and* Metal Gear Solid *are proof positive that Konami's still got a little of that Midas Touch left in 'em. They're just not applying it to the franchises we love best:* Contra *and* Castlevania. *I think we 2D fans need to keep striving against the dying of the light, because right now 2D gaming definitely qualifies as the walking dead.*

As for Guardian Heroes *on the Dreamcast, there's a better chance of seeing a sequel to MUSHA (how's that for an obscure reference). First off, Treasure's never done a sequel. Secondly, GH didn't sell well and it's 2D. Working Designs? Not even Posty, the vault of gaming wisdom, knows what they're going to do next...*

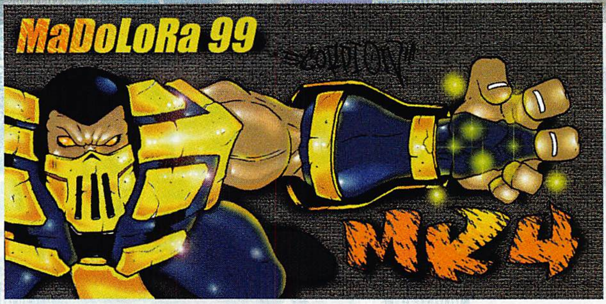
Upgrade Options Are Makin' Him Crazy!

Greetings from the Asylum, High and Mighty Postmeister. I would bow before you in person, but the orderlies refuse to loosen this infernal straitjacket. I was just wondering, is the Dreamcast really that good? I mean not all people have the money to buy all the game systems that come out, though I do of course. With PS2 still 1 to 1 1/2 years away, I am in a quandary as to which console to throw my well-earned cheddar at, although it will probably be both. I was just looking out for the less fortunate "people." I thank thee in advance and ask that you turn your massive powers of Post-Fu on this query of mine. And as always... Say Goodnight!

Eddie V
Via the Internet

Must be a pretty sweet Asylum to have Internet access, Eddie... but typing a distress letter to yours truly from the confines of your rubber room using only your nose is one of the best examples of the dexterity needed to train in the art of Post-Fu I've ever heard of! Your effort has earned you a place among the elite, a trainee in the hallowed arts that so few have mastered, and a seat at the banquet table of the only man who holds the keys to the kingdom of gaming nirvana, The Postmeister!

Until you manage an escape from the joint, I'll hook you up with the 4-1-1 on where to sling your cheddar. As my followers all know, Posty is all about the here and now, and right now I'm all over the Dreamcast like white on rice, in a glass of milk, on a paper plate, in a snowstorm. It's got a decent library of games, and as all our fresh-off-the-vine E3 coverage demonstrates, there's a lot more great stuff coming.



Twenty-one year old Andy Madolora, from Wahiawa, H.I. recently E-mailed us a few samples of his work, and since we're in a "Mortal Mood" this month, I thought we'd show this one off. You've got skills, Andy... but remember kids, if you want it printed, send it straight to me (postmeister@gamefan.com), not the Art Director.

In the end, it's a wise Post-Fu acolyte that comes to realize the deepest truths for himself, and it sounds like you have done just that — the PlayStation 2 is quite a long way off, and the Dreamcast is here and now. I'll leave you with something one of my old Postal co-workers said, when he was asked this very same question (in-between flashbacks of unprovoked dog attacks): "Go wit' the one whut brung ya." I never really understood what that meant until now...

Who am I kidding, I still don't understand what that means.

What Is It They Say About Opinions?

I'm writing this letter in response to the "No Respect" section in your May 1999 issue of *GameFan*. The reason why none of those games sold well or got "no respect" is cause they really aren't that good. I've been playing games ever since the Atari 2600 was king. I've managed three Funcoland stores, have attended two E3's, have owned many, many game systems, and have owned my own video game business, so I feel that I'm more than qualified to put you people in your places. These games weren't good, and all your complaining about this and that, the fact still remains that they just weren't good enough. If people liked the game they would have bought the game. Stop trying to force people to share your OPINIONS, just because you think those games are good doesn't mean the majority should bow down and agree with you. I for one think the majority of the games you listed SUCK! But that's my opinion. You have your opinions, but stop with the crying... not many people liked those games so live with it!

More than likely you won't print this, maybe cause you know I'm right, but I had to set you straight.

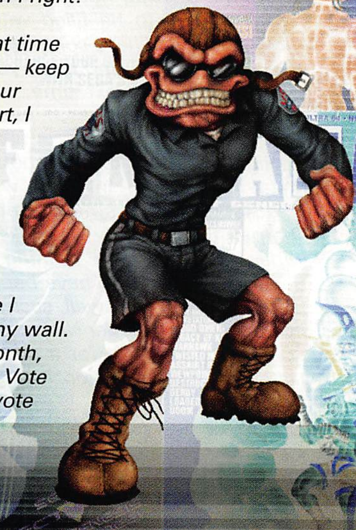
Chris (Arcade-A-Holic) Sims
Via the Internet

Man, you're so right, Mr. Arcade-A-Holic... what business have we, commenting on games we felt never got the respect they deserved? Now that I step back and analyze the situation, not one page of editorial in our magazine is free from some misguided writer's so-called "opinion" on video games! How incredibly irresponsible of GameFan's *writers to believe they should be giving readers their opinion on games... I'm going to invoke the P.T.F.F. (Punch That Freak in the Face, if you're literate) law right now, and show them all what for! I've tried to tell them time and time again... never tell the readers what you really think about games! I mean, that would lead to them respecting you for your opinions, and maybe even valuing the magazine as a source of unbiased, truthful content — and we can't have that, there's just way too much of that on the magazine racks right now!*

While we know that, because you've been selling games for a long time, you feel eminently qualified to "put us in our places," I'd wager my entire inventory of frozen peas that you couldn't count the number of times you've sold a terrible game to a 13-year-old kid who didn't know any better, just to move inventory... swearing up and down that it was the best game you'd ever seen. A game retailer's credibility as a game critic is less than zero, my friend... a magazine editor, who plays games for long periods of time every day of the week (yes, even the bad ones) is just a slightly better gauge of what's good and what isn't than a game peddler.

I've got a newsflash for you, slick... that's why video game magazines exist... There are countless games that didn't sell as well as they should have. If sales figures are your measure of how good a game is, you must be fully on the Deer Hunter, Power Rangers, *and* Barbie *bandwagons, am I right?*

Hey, it's that time again, kids — keep sending your envelope art, I need more wallpaper for the cave. If I like your stuff, it'll show up here before I slap it on my wall. Till next month, remember: Vote early, and vote often!




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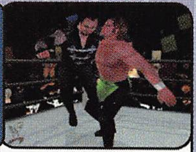
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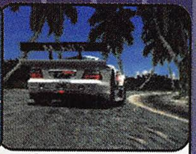

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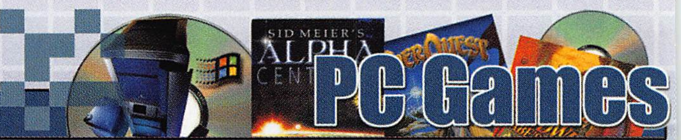
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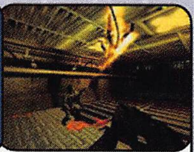
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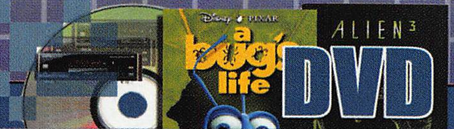

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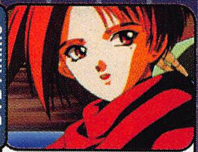
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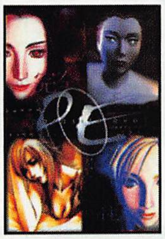

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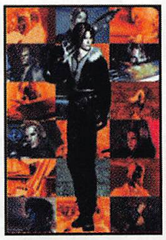

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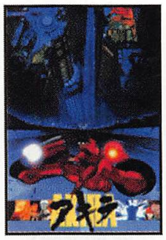
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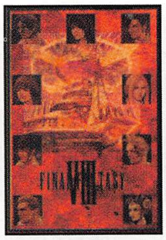


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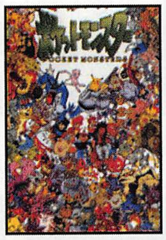

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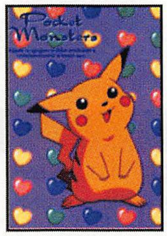

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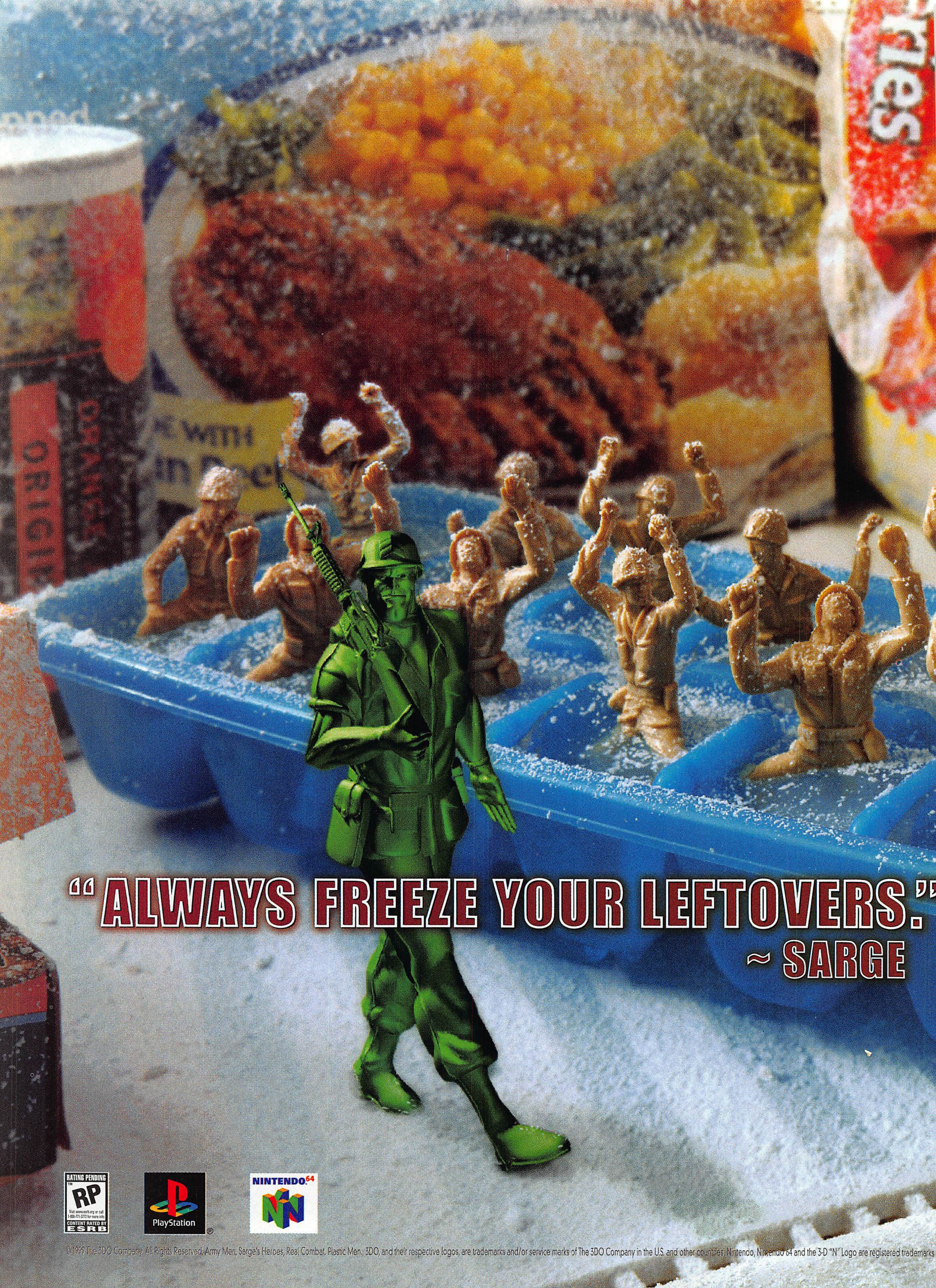

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